

STAN LEE Presents

HOWARD THE DUCK

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	4
OF DICE & DUCKS!	5
All the world's a <i>game</i> , and the ducks and women in it merely <i>tokens</i> ! BILL MANTLO & GENE COLAN	
DUCK OF MANY FACES	51
A Famous Artists Portfolio by MARIE SEVERIN, WALTER SIMONSON, HOWARD CHAYKIN, JOHN BYRNE, MARSHALL ROGERS.	
STREET PEEPLE	58
Hey, like ya can't make a omelet without breakin' some eggs, y'know? LYNN GRAEME & NED SONNTAG	
WISE QUACKS	64



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EDITORIAL

The Continued Saga of Those Scruffy Editors Who Bring You the Duck:

As you recall (maybe), last issue's semi-hysterical editorial promised to tell you the behind-the-scenes story of how the DUCK-WORLD issue came to be.

Like virtually all stories published here at Marvel, DUCKWORLD was hatched during an editorial conference. (This is a meeting between writer and editor — and sometimes artist — during which the spark of a story is gently fanned to full flame or rudely stamped out by those in charge: in this case, on this book, *me*.) There were those who, before this story appeared, thought such a story, in which Howard's world is depicted in detail, should never be told. But it *had* to be told!

Here's why:

Although fictional characters are created by people, it is a widely known phenomenon that said characters, if they're vividly and authentically formed, take on a life of their own. They begin to change and actualize themselves quite apart from what their creators sometimes intend. In Howard's case, he'd been making comparisons between his home — which Bill Mantlo dubbed Duckworld for the benefit of us humans (to ducks, it would just be *earth*, right?) — and our planet for some time, to our detriment.

And yet Howard's nostalgia for his lost home didn't quite jibe with known facts about him: that he'd been a rebel, a drop-out from his own society. Against *what* was he rebelling if it was all so lovely back home?

This, clearly, was a character living in a delusion, yearning for an Eden that had never existed.

And so it became imperative that Howard confront his delusions.

If you read the last issue you are well aware that Howard's return home left him free of his delusions, and yet also confused and... lost. How will he cope with his confusion and adjust to his loss?

Ahhhh! We have plans for this book that will knock your tail feathers off! If you thought returning Howard to Duckworld was risky, wait'll ya see what we do in the future! From now on, consider this magazine a dangerous weapon, designed to blow up the status quo at any and every opportunity!

A Few Notes About the Personnel — Missing & Present — on the Duckworld Issue:

It was with real chagrin that, as we were planning the incredibly complicated DUCKWORLD story, I realized I'd overcommitted Gene Colan to such an extent that he would not be able to pencil the story. My excuse is inexperience in scheduling comicbook stories (This was ten months ago: I'm learnin'! I'm learnin'!). My relief is that Mr. Colan, one of the world's natural noblemen, has graciously forgiven me. I'm grateful beyond words for the incredible job Michael Golden and Bob McLeod turned out. Both were driven and over-worked to such a degree on this story that I'm amazed they're still with us — both in spirit and in the flesh!

Thanks also to the letterers and other production people, and to Design Director Nora MacLin, all of whom put forth time and effort far "beyond the call of duty." Ralph Macchio, as always, was the cool and efficient professional, keeping both me and the department from falling into total shambles.

LYNN

Being an acute observer and crafty reader you will have noticed that on the inside front cover, where we usually have a portrait of Howard and Bev, we have something different this time... *because (trumpets please!) We're Looking for People Who Want to Draw Howard the Duck!* So we're inviting you to recommend artists you'd like to see in a second story (the first story belongs, of course, to Gene Colan). To artists we extend an invitation to "audition" — but only after contacting us first and getting the go-ahead, please. We will pay our usual rate for frontispieces. Now: take advantage of the opportunity to have an active part in the creation of future Howard the Duck issues by letting us know what you think of Trina Robbins' art re: Howard.



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HOWARD THE DUCK



POUND

YOU'LL BELIEVE A WOMAN
CAN AIRBRUSH!

WAAUGH!

LADY, WHAT
ARE YA
DOIN'?

I FEEL
NAKED!

COME TO BED,
DUCKY! I
PROMISE...

... YOU'LL BE INKED
IN THE NEXT
PANEL. SEE?

UH, DON'T LOOK
NOW, TOOTS, BUT
WE'RE NOT
ALONE!

OH, SHE'S JUST
TRYING TO SHOW
SHE CAN DRAW
BAD GUYS, TOO!

SEE, SHE HAS A DEEP
COMPULSION TO PROVE A
WOMAN CAN DRAW A DUCK!

WHERE I COME
FROM WE CALL
THAT EGGSY!

IN FACT SHE
WANTS TO PORTRAY
THE WHOLE SPECTRUM
OF CHARACTERS!

WE'LL WATCH
OUT FOR A FLYIN'
SPECTRUM, BEV!

WAAUGH!
I'D RATHER BE
IN PHILADELPHIA!

Oh...
HOWARD!

HOWARD
THE DUCK
IN

CHAPTER ONE:
SWAMP
FEVER!

OF DICE AND DUCKS!

JUST YESTERDAY HOWARD THE DUCK THOUGHT HE HAD IT MADE. A FRIEND, WINDA WESTER-- WITH UNCANNY ABILITIES AND POWERS FAR BEYOND THE KEN OF MORTAL MEN... WHOOPS! WRONG STRIP!

~~~~~

ANYWAY, WINDA HAD USED HER PSYCHIC POWERS TO RE-SHIFT THE COSMIC AXIS, OPENING THE DOORWAYS BETWEEN DIMENSIONS-- SENDING HOWARD AND HIS BELOVED BEVERLY SWITZLER THROUGH THE VOID... TO DUCKWORLD!

~~~~~

SO HOWARD WENT HOME. GREAT, RIGHT? WRONG. DUCKWORLD TURNED OUT TO BE JUST AS INSANE AS EARTH...

... TO WHICH OUR VERY DEPRESSED DRAKE HAS NOW RETURNED, FULL OF THE GLICHD REALIZATION THAT YOU REALLY CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN!

DON'T BE SO DOWN, DUCKY. SO DUCKWORLD DIDN'T WORK OUT-- SO WHAT?? DUCKTOR STRANGE MANAGED TO SEND US BOTH BACK TO EARTH.

AT LEAST HERE EVERYTHING HORRIBLE'S ALREADY HAPPENED TO YOU.

TELL THAT TO THE ANIMATED MUCK-MONSTER WAITING IN THE SHADOWS!

HIS EYES ARE RED ORBS--
WINDOWS TO NOTHING, FOR
HE POSSESSES NO SOUL!

THINK OF THEM
RATHER AS
MIRRORS--
REFLECTING
THE SOULS
OF OTHERS.

INABLE
TO GENERATE
NEEDS OR
DESIRE'S OF
HIS OWN, HIS
EMPATHIC
NATURE ALLOWS
HIM TO FEEL ONLY
WHAT OTHERS FEEL.

HOWARD, I
DON'T MIND
MOTHERING
YOU THROUGH
THE TOUGH
PARTS--

--BUT TALK
TO ME, HUH? GIVE
ME SOME FEED-
BACK. I NEED
AFFECTION
TOO!

I MEAN, GOING TO
YOUR WORLD
WITH YOU--THE
SOLE HUMAN
AMIDST MILLIONS
OF TALKING
DUCKS...

...THAT DIDN'T
DO WONDERS
FOR MY
SELF-ESTEEM,
EITHER!

PLUNK

YA DON'T HAVETA
TELL ME, TOOTS--I
KNOW, WE BOTH LOST.

IT'S JUST THAT I HAVEN'T
COME TA GRIPS WITH
REALITY YET--WITH
THE FACT THAT I'M
DOOMED TA BE A
STRANGER IN A
STRANGE LAND
WHEREVER I GO.

OR MAYBE I'M
LOOKING AT THINGS
WRONG? MAYBE
LIKE THE WACKIES,
THOSE DEMENTED
DUCKS THAT FORMED
A CULT IN MY
NAME--*

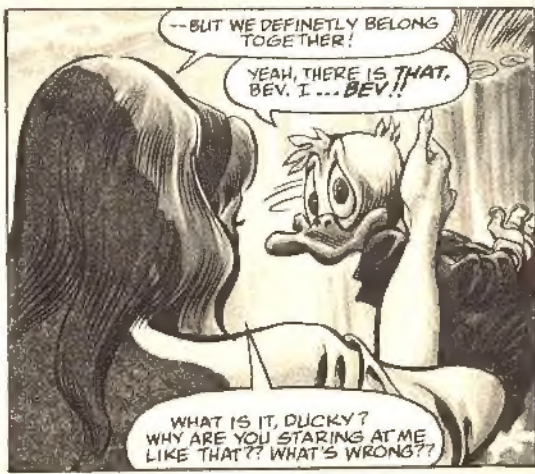
--MAYBE I GOTTA
ACCEPT BEIN TRAPPED IN
WORLDS I NEVER MADE?

YEAH, MAYBE HOME IS
WHEREVER I DECIDE TA HANG
MY HAT--IF I HAON'T LOST IT
ON DUCKWORLD, THAT IS.

* LAST /SH. -- LYNN.



WE LEARNED
SOMETHING
ELSE, DUCKY. WE
MAY NOT BELONG
ON EARTH, OR
ON DUCKWORLD--



--BUT WE DEFINITELY BELONG
TOGETHER!

YEAH, THERE IS THAT,
BEV. I ... BEV..

WHAT IS IT, DUCKY?
WHY ARE YOU STARING AT ME
LIKE THAT?? WHAT'S WRONG??

N-NO REASON, TOOTS!
JUST DON'T MAKE A
MOVE, THAT'S ALL!
STAY CALM! TAKE
DEEP BREATHS!
COUNT TA A
THOUSAND!

HOWARD, HAVE
YOU POPPED
YOUR CORK??

THE MAN-THING
HAS SENSED
THE PONDNESS
EXISTING
BETWEEN THIS
POWL AND
FEMALE...

...SENSED THE
LOVING THAT
BINDS TWO
SOULS TOGETHER.

IT IS THE
EMOTIONAL VIBRATIONS OF
THAT LOVE THAT HAS DRAWN
HIM TO THIS SPOT, BUT
NOW THAT FEELING
IS OVERSHADOWED...

--BY THE WOMAN'S
CONFUSION AND
THE DUCK'S
DESPERATION!

BEN! TRUST ME!
THERE'S ABSOLUTELY
NUTHIN' TA GET UP-
SET ABOUT!

BUT, I'M NOT
UPSET, DUCKY! I
FEEL PERFECTLY--

--TERRIFIED!

UNDER THE CIRCUMSTAN-
CES IT MAY NOT HAVE
BEEN THE WRONG THING
TO SAY, BUT IS
DEFINITELY THE WRONG
THING TO FEEL...

FOR WHOEVER KNOWS FEAR
BURNS AT THE MAN-
THING'S TOUCH!

I KNOW!

CRACK

I RAN INTO THIS SHAMBLIN'
MUD-MASS THE FIRST TIME
THE COSMIC AXIS SHIFTED
DROPPIN' ME ON
EARTH!

I
DON'T REMEMBER
EVER BEIN' ESPECIALLY
TERRIFIED BY HIM--

--BUT THEN, BEIN'
A TALKIN' DUCK IN A
WORLD OF HAIRLESS
APES, YA CAN KINDA
ACCEPT ANYTHIN'--
EVEN THE MAN-THING--
GIVEN TIME!

POOR BEV WASN'T
GIVEN THE CHANCE TA
GET USED TA OLD SLIME-
CAKES, THOUGH! SHE'S
SCARED OUTTA HER GOURD...
AN' HER FEAR'S DRAWIN'
THE MAN-THING ON!

OH, GOD--
KEEP IT AWAY FROM ME! I'LL
BE GOOD!

DON'T PANIC, BEV!
I WON'T LET 'IM
TOUCH YA! I...

H-HOWARD!
IT'S STILL
COMING
AT ME!

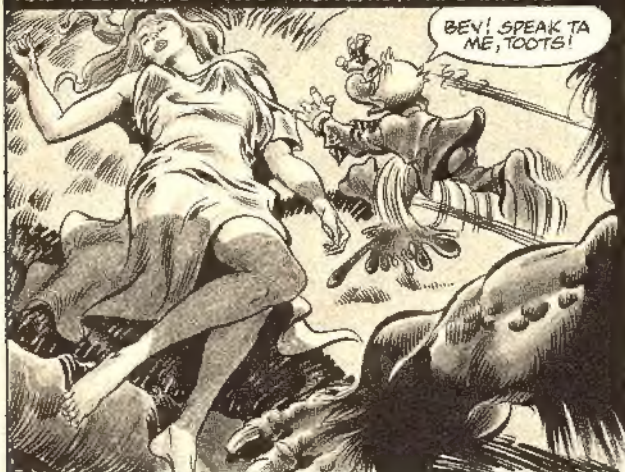
BECAUSE
YOU'RE
SCARED,
BEV!
THE MAN-
THING
RESPONDS
TO FEAR!

SHE'S
FAINTED!

Ooohh...

WITH LOSS OF
CONSCIOUSNESS
COMES LOSS OF FEAR.

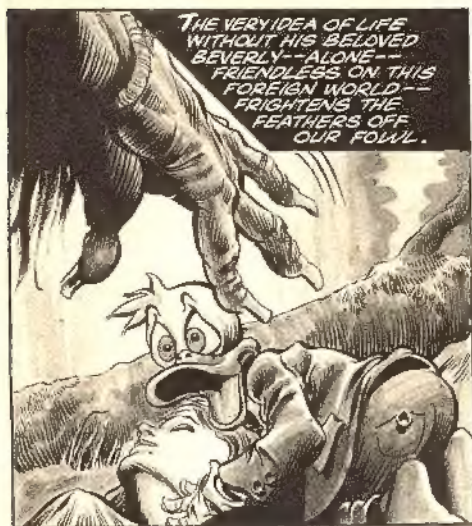
THE MAN-THING HALTS HIS FORWARD SHUFFLE---WAVERS--
AND THEN WAITS FOR FURTHER EMOTIONAL INPUT..



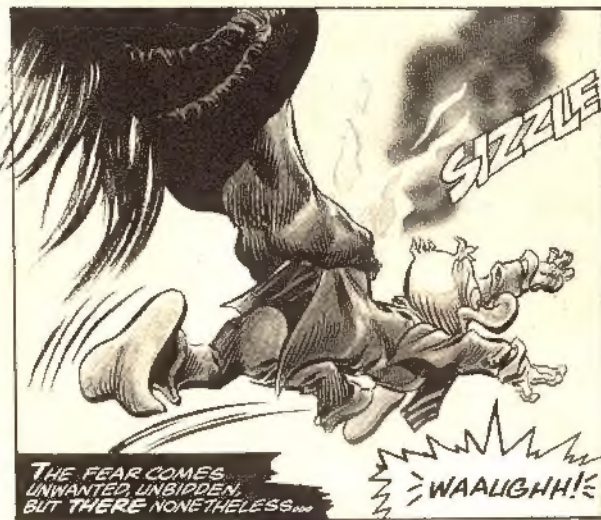
BEV! SPEAK TA
ME, TOOTS!

SHE'S SO
QUIET---SO
STILL! AS
STILL AS...
NO! I WON'T
EVEN THINK
THAT!

HOWARD'S
SENTENCE HANGS UNCOMPLETED, BUT
IT IS COMPLETED IN HIS THOUGHTS!



THE VERY IDEA OF LIFE
WITHOUT HIS BELOVED
BEVERLY---ALONE---
FRIENDLESS ON THIS
FOREIGN WORLD---
FRIGHTENS THE
FEATHERS OFF
OUR FOWL.



THE FEAR COMES,
UNWANTED, UNBIDDEN,
BUT THERE NONE THELESS...

SIZZLE

WAAUGH!!



AND WHOEVER KNOWS
FEAR---AH, BUT YOU
KNOW THE REST!

AS THE DUCK SINKS INTO UN-CONSCIOUSNESS, HIS FEAR NO LONGER REGISTERS ON THE MAN-THING'S EMPATHIC RECEPTORS.



YET THE MACABRE MUCK-MONSTER LINGERS OVER INSENSIBLE BEVERLY...

... SENSING, ALTHOUGH SHE HERSELF IS SENSELESS, THE LOVE IN HER--



--THE MOTHERING INSTINCTS TO WHICH HE AT FIRST RESPONDED...

... AND IN SEARCH OF WHICH HE'D SCoured THE SWAMP.



WHY? HE CANNOT SAY, FOR HE HAS NO MOUTH, NO MIND.

HE MERELY ACTS... FOR HE IS THE MAN-THING!

LATER, ESTABLISHING SHOT: THE SWAMP. HIGH NOON. BIRDS FLY. INSECTS BUZZ.

THE SUN FILTERS DOWN THROUGH THE PRIMORDIAL VEGETATION, HEATING THE FETID WATERS TO A STINKING STEW.



IT IS A HELL ON EARTH, AND IN IT SOME CREATURES ARE RIGHT AT HOME. THEY ARE PREDATORS....

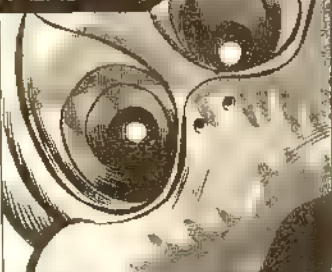


... AND RARELY DO THEY FIND THEIR PREY SO SATISFYINGLY SERVED UP!



AT THAT MOMENT
HOWARD THE DUCK
OPENS HIS EYES.

WHAT IS IT THAT WARNS HIM?
SOME DUCK-SENSE, LONG
DORMANT, THAT ENABLED
HIS RACE TO SURVIVE IN
THE DIM DAWN OF THEIR OWN
PREHISTORY?



SOME INSTINCT
PASSED DOWN FROM
DUCK TO DUCKLING AS HOWARD
LAY INCUBATING IN HIS EGG?

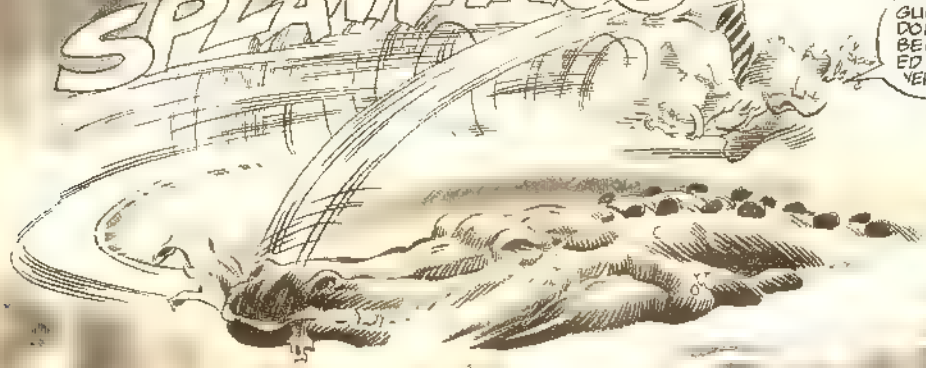
OR IS IT
MERELY
THE SLOSHING
OF THE SWAMP
WATERS THAT
HAS ROCKED
HIM BACK
TO REALITY?

HEH-HEH!
NICE
IVORIES!



BUT YA COULD USE
A GOOD MOUTHWASH!

SPLANNNGGG



GUESS YA
DON'T LIKE
BEIN' DICTAT-
ED TO BY
VER DINNER!

WHATEVER THE CASE, THE DUCK IS ALERTED
TO HIS DANGER IN TIME, AND THUS... SURVIVES!

THAT WAS A CLOSE PLUCK!
WAAKE MY CLOTHES! WHATEVER
THE MAN-THING DIDN'T BURN
OFF ME- THE GATOR GOT!

THE MAN-
THING? HEY,
WHERE IS
OLD SLIME-
CAKES?

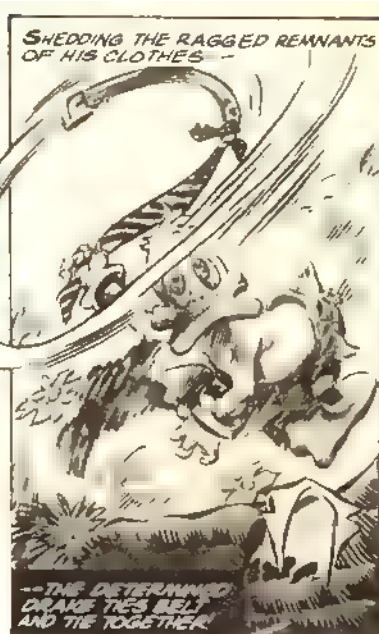


AN NOW THAT I THINK OF IT
WHERE'S BEV??! THE GATOR--?
NO, HE LOOKED TOO LEAN TA
HAVE JUST FINISHED
FEASTIN ON A
FULLY FLESHED
FEMALE!

AN SHE WOULDN'TA GONE
OFF AN' LEFT ME HERE
UNCONSCIOUS NOT UN-
LESS SHE HAD AN
APPOINTMENT WITH
HER SHRINK!



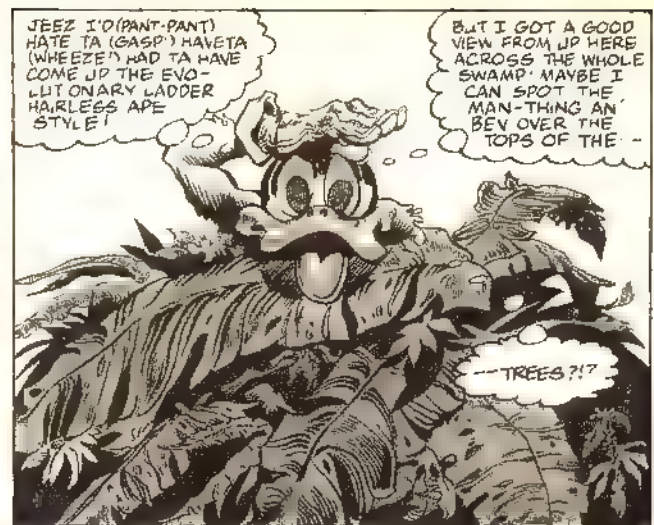
WHICH MEANS
THE MAN-TH'NG
MUSTA TOOF HER!!
BUT WHERE? WHY?
?WAAUGH?!?





--AND CLIMBS HIS LIMBS TREMBLING WITH THE UN-ACCUSTOMED EXERTION!

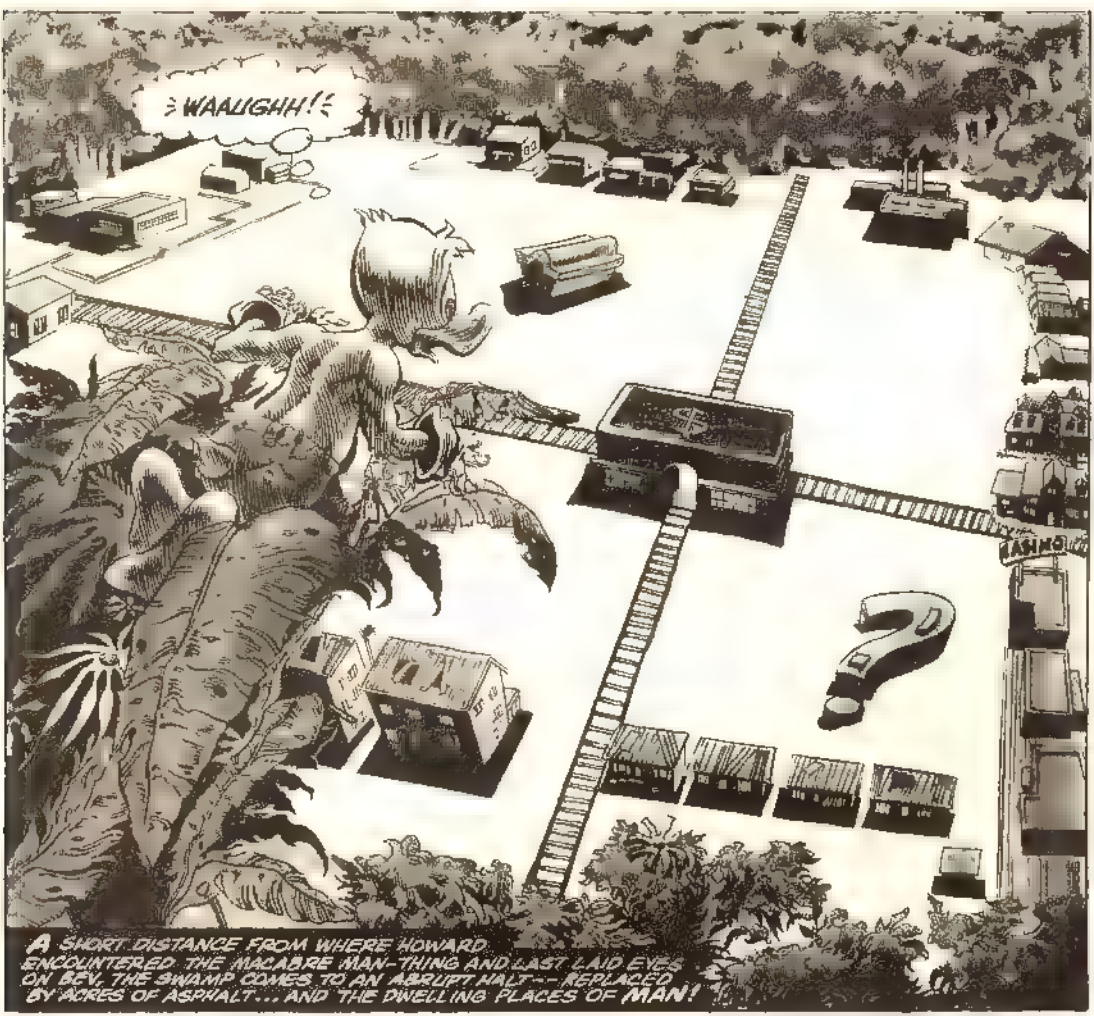
AT LAST HE ATTAINS THE PALMY PINNACLE!



JEEZ I'D (PANT-PANT) HATE TA (GASP) HAVETA (WHEEZE) HAD TA HAVE COME UP THE EVOLUTONARY LADDER HARLESS APE STYLE!

BUT I GOT A GOOD VIEW FROM UP HERE ACROSS THE WHOLE SWAMP. MAYBE I CAN SPOT THE MAN-THING AN' BEV OVER THE TOPS OF THE --

--TREES???



WAAUGH!!

A SHORT DISTANCE FROM WHERE HOWARD ENCOUNTERED THE MACABRE MAN-THING AND LAST LAID EYES ON BEV, THE SWAMP COMES TO AN ABRUPT HALT-- REPLACED BY ACRES OF ASPHALT... AND THE DWELLING PLACES OF MAN!

AND, IT WOULD SEEM, OF MEN-THINGS!

SLIME CAKES--CARRYIN' BEV UP TA SOME KINDA TOLLBOOTH!

WELCOME TO SWAMP CITY, STRANGERS! IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO SPEND IN OUR COMMUNITY, WE'D LIKE TO PRESENT YOU WITH...

THE MINDLESS MUCK-MONSTER IGNORES BOTH THE PROFFERED PAYMENT AND THE SHOE-SHAPED TRAVEL TOKEN OFFERED BY THE FIGURE WITHIN THE BOOTH!

THE GATEKEEPER SENSING THAT THE MAN-THING IS NO ORDINARY TOURIST, LET'S HIM PASS WITHOUT ARGUMENT!

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE FLORIDA EVERGLADES THAT MAKES IT A STOMPIN' GROUND FOR THE MAN-THING, THE NEXUS POINT OF ALL REALITIES--



-- AN A HOST TO A CITY STUCK IN THE CENTER OF A SWAMP!?

I'VE COME FULL CIRCLE SINCE THE DAY I WAS DROPPED ON EARTH!

THEN, AT LEAST, I COULD ALWAYS HOPE TA GET BACK HOME AGAIN!

THIS TIME I KNOW EVEN HOME AIN'T WORTH HOPIN' FOR!

THERE'S ONLY BEV KEEPIN' ME SAME AN' ANYBODY THAT MESSES WITH MY ONE SHOT AT STABILITY--

--IS GONNA HAVETA ANSWER TA ONE FIGHTIN' MAD FOWL!

I'M COMIN', BEV BABY-- FOR THE BOTH OF US!

SHORTLY...

THERE'S THE
TOLL BOOTH! THEY
PASSED OL' SLIME-
CAKES THROUGH
WITHOUT BATTIN'
AN EYE--

--LET'S SEE IF
THEY DO THE SAME
FOR SOME
COVERED WITH
FEATHERS!

IF NOT, I'LL
SLAP 'EM WITH AN
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION SUIT
SO FAST THEIR HEADS'LL SPIN!

'SCUSE ME--
ANBODY
HOME?
HELLO IN
THERE!

HELLO YOURSELF--AND
WELCOME TO SWAMP CITY,
THE FUTURE CAPITAL
OF THE FAIR STATE
OF FLORIDA!

WHAT HAPPENED TA
TALLAHASSEE?

IT'S STILL
THERE BUT IT
CANNOT OFFER TO
NEWCOMERS
THE INCENTIVES
WE CAN!

UNLIMITED REAL ESTATE AND PROSPECTS
FOR GROWTH, FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS,
NO APPRECIABLE LABOR UNREST...

WH, I'M JUST
HERE LOOKIN'
FOR A
FRIEND

IN THAT CASE,
TAKE THIS COMPLIMENTARY
TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS--

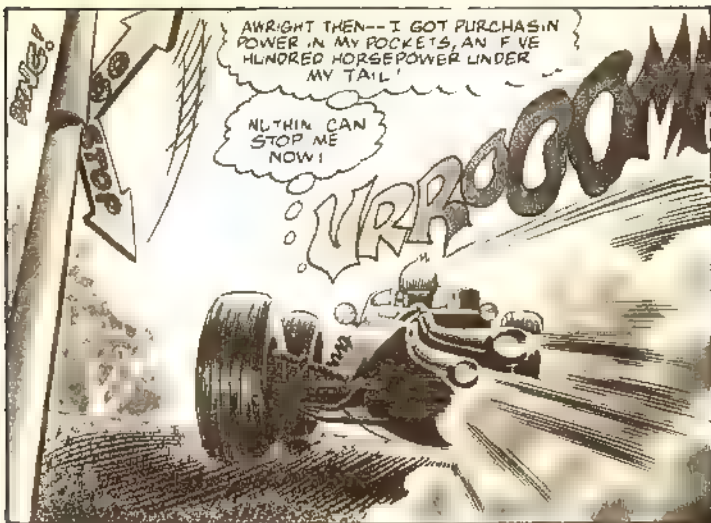
--AND THAT
CAR OVER
THERE! WE
HOPE YOUR
VISIT WILL
ENCOURAGE
YOU TO
RETURN...
FOR
GOOD!

FREE MONEY
AN A FREE CAR?
THERE'S GOTTA
BE A CATCH
SOMEWHERE!

I COULDN'T GET A GOOD
LOOK AT THAT 'TURKEY' IN
THE BOOTH, BUT WHAT
AM I WORRIED ABOUT?
HE GAVE ME ALL I
NEED TO GO AFTER
BEV--

--AN I DIDN'T
HAVETA SIGN
ANYTHIN'!

THEY CAN'T SQUEEZE
AN ENDORSEMENT
FOR SWAMP CITY
OUTTA ME LATER!



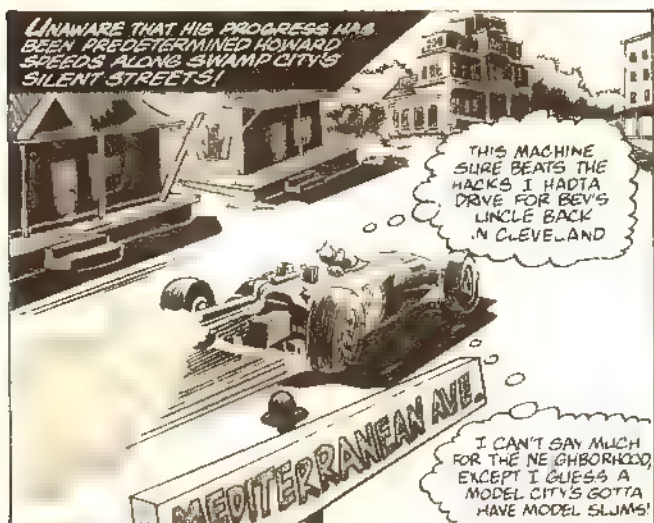
AWRIGHT THEN-- I GOT PURCHASIN' POWER IN MY POCKETS, AN' FIVE HUNDRED HORSEPOWER UNDER MY TAIL!

NUTHIN CAN STOP ME NOW!

IN THE SEMI-DARKNESS OF THE PAYMASTER'S BOOTH A GUTTURAL GROWL RESPONDS TO OUR FOUL...



AH MY FINE FEATHERED FRIEND-- BUT YOU WILL ONLY GO AS FAR AS A ROLL OF THE DIE!



UNWARE THAT HIS PROGRESS HAS BEEN PREDETERMINED HOWARD SPEEDS ALONG SWAMP CITY'S SILENT STREETS!

THIS MACHINE SURE BEATS THE HACKS I HADTA DRIVE FOR BEV'S UNCLE BACK IN CLEVELAND

I CAN'T SAY MUCH FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD, EXCEPT I GUESS A MODEL CITY'S GOTTA HAVE MODEL SLUMS!



THEN, THREE BLOCKS INTO HIS JOURNEY...



'WAAK! YOU! OLD MAN! YOU DID THIS! YOU SHOT MY TIRE!

WHAT'S DAT, YOUNG UN? CAIN'T HEAR YUH!



IF N YOU ALL'VE COME TUN LOOK AT DE PROPERTY YOU ALL CAN JEST TURN 'ROUND AN' GO HOME!

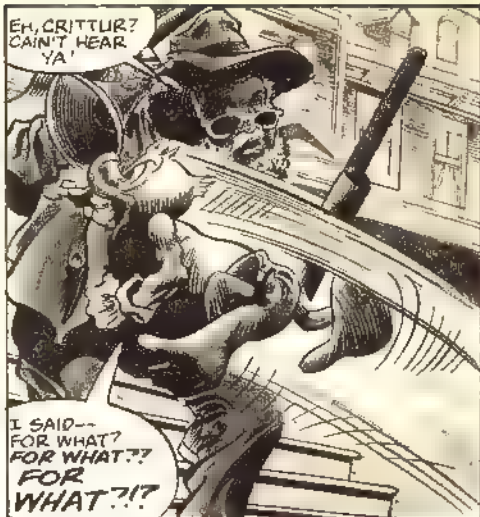
DEAF MELON WASHINGTON AIN'T MOVIN LESS HE GETS HIS PRICE!



I USED TA BE DA MOS' FAMOUS
BLUES CRITIC 'N DE WORLD,
BEFORE I LOST MUH HEARIN'.
DAT'S BEFORE I BOUGHT DIS
PLACE FOR \$60 OFF DE ORIGINAL
OWNERS. NOW DERE TRYIN'
TA DRIVE ME OUT DEY SAY
MY KIND-- DEAF PEOPLE--
LOWERS PROPERTY
VALUES!

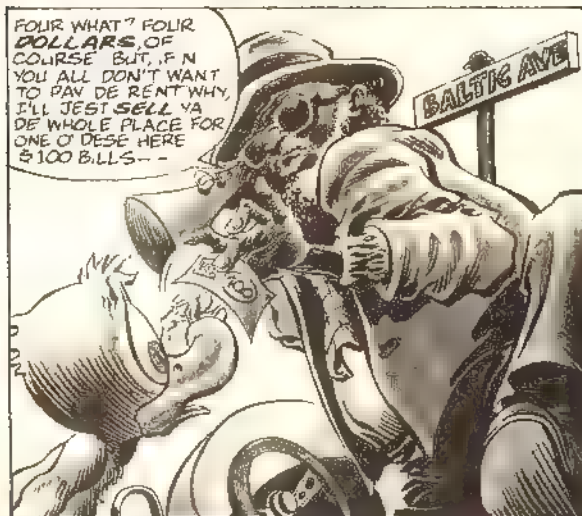
BUT I STILL
HOLD DE
LEASE, AN'
IF YOL AIN'T
COME TA FORE-
CLOSE, YOU
ALL OWES
ME \$4!

FOR
WHAT?



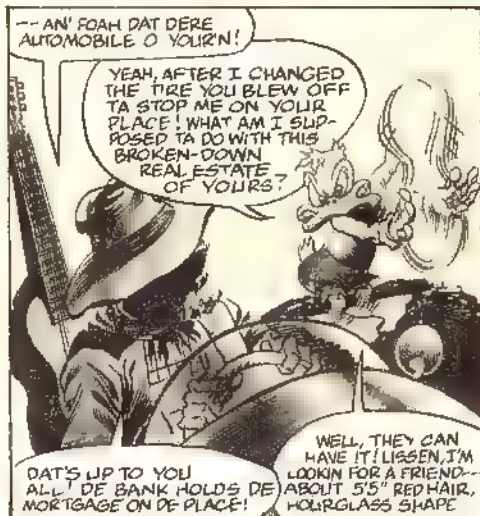
EH, CRITTUR?
CAIN'T HEAR
YA!

I SAID--
FOR WHAT?
FOR WHAT?!!
FOR
WHAT?!?



FOUR WHAT? FOUR
DOLLARS, OF
COURSE BUT, F N
YOU ALL DON'T WANT
TA PAY DE RENT WHY,
I'LL JEST SELL YA
DE WHOLE PLACE FOR
ONE O' DESE HERE
\$100 BILLS--

BALTIC AVE

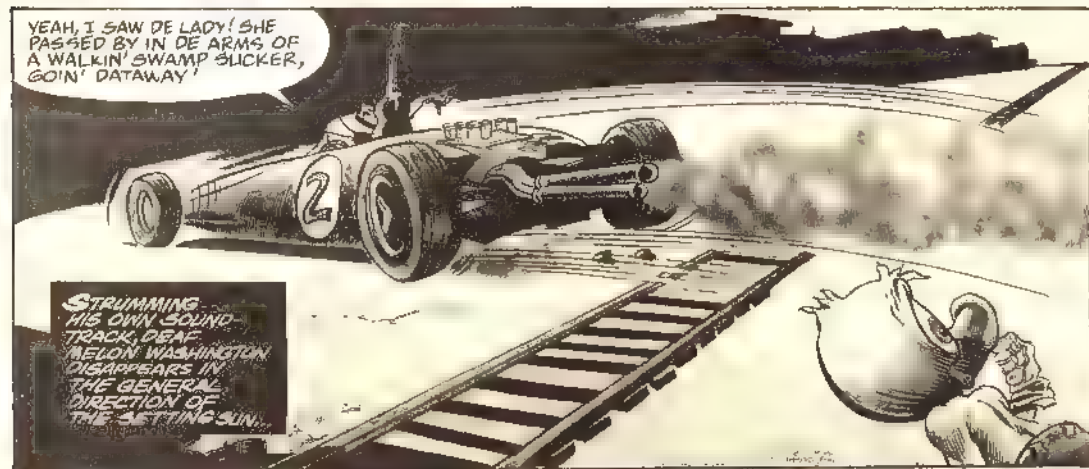


-- AN' FOAH DAT DERE
AUTOMOBILE O YOURN!

YEAH, AFTER I CHANGED
THE TIRE YOU BLEW OFF
TA STOP ME ON YOUR
PLACE! WHAT AM I SUP-
POSED TA DO WITH THIS
BROKEN-DOWN
REAL ESTATE--
OF YOURS?

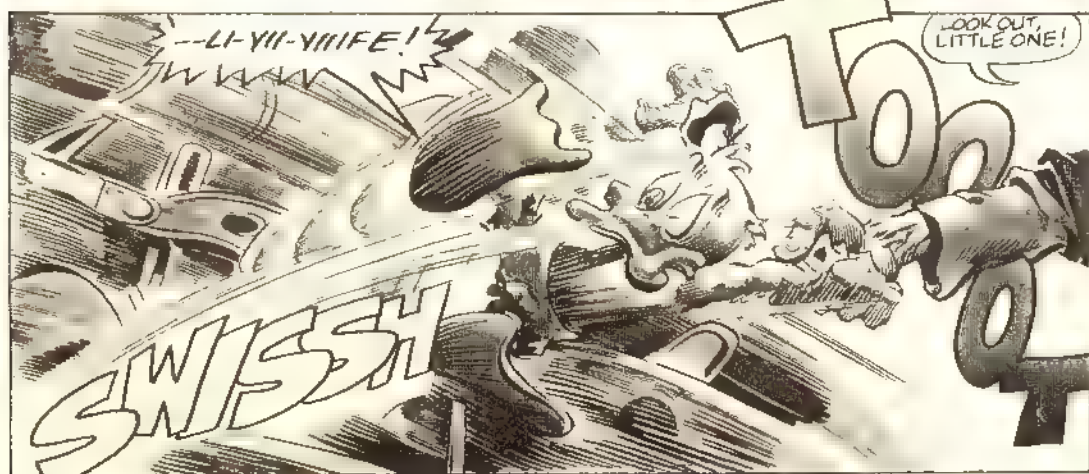
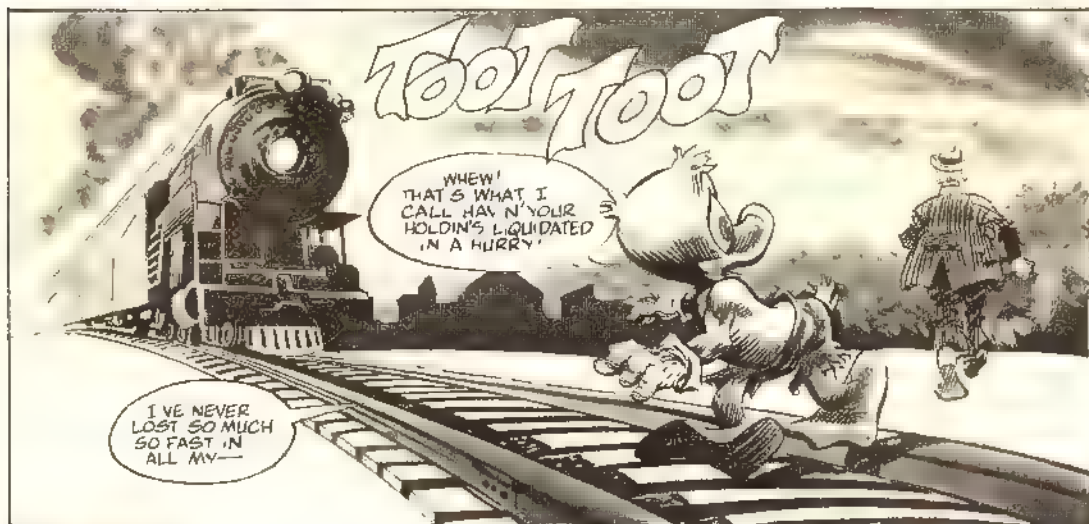
DAT'S UP TO YOU
ALL! DE BANK HOLDS DE
MORTGAGE ON DE PLACE!

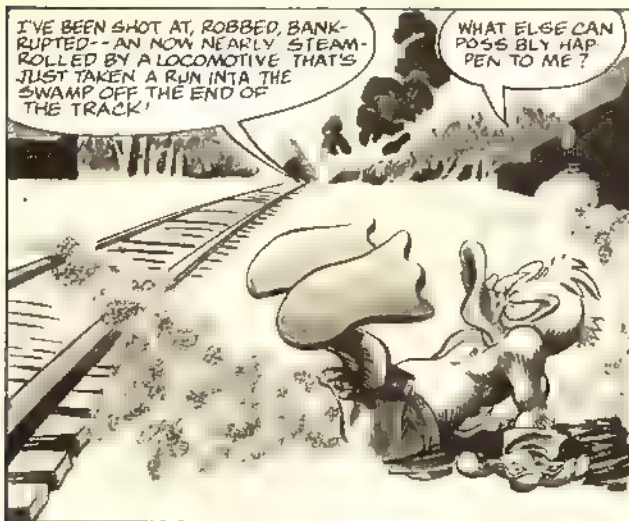
WELL, THEY CAN
HAVE IT! LISSEN, I'M
LOOKIN FOR A FRIEND--
ABOUT 5'5" RED HAIR,
HOURGLASS SHAPE



YEAH, I SAW DE LADY! SHE
PASSED BY IN DE ARMS OF
A WALKIN' SWAMP SUCKER,
GOIN' DATAWAY!

STRUMMING
HIS OWN SOUND
TRACK, DEAF
MELON WASHINGTON
DISAPPEARS IN
THE GENERAL
DIRECTION OF
THE SETTING SUN.





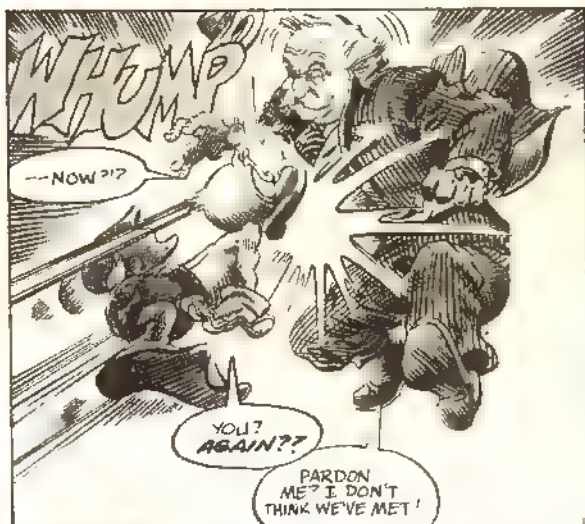
WE MOVED TO SWAMP CITY MONTHS AGO,
LURED BY THE LOW RENTS PROMISED IN
THE BROCHURE, THEN EVERYTHING
CHANGED.

MORTGAGES WERE
FORECLOSED HERE AND
ON VERMONT AND CONNECT-
ICUT AVENUES---



THE BOB-BONZO
WHO WALKED OFF
WITH MY BEV!

THIS IS
IT MUD-MAW
THERE AIN' NUTHIN'
GONNA COME BETWEEN
YOL AN ME--



AIN'T YOU THE
LOCAL TAX
COLLECTOR?

DEAR ME, NO! I'M A
REPRESENTATIVE OF SWAMP
CITY'S LOTTERY,
AUTHORITY!

HERE,
TAKE A
CHANCE!

A FREE WAGER?
WHY NOT? WHAT'VE
I GOT TO... WAAK!

GO
TO
JAIL

HEY,
BUDDY! YOL'RE
NEW HERE,
AIN'TCHA?



YOU GOT ANY MONEY OR DO I HAVETA RUN YOU IN FOR VAGRANCY?

HUH? WAIT LEMME CHECK MY ROCKETS...

WHERE'D THESE COME FROM?



WHAT MATTERS IS WHERE YOU'RE GOIN FEATHERS - FOUR BLOCKS TO THE CITY JAIL!

YA CAN'T DO THIS TO ME! I'M NOT A CITIZEN! I WANNA CALL MY AMBASSADOR!

EVERYONE PLEASE RETURN TO THE BUSINESS OF MOVING OUT!

POOR LITTLE DUCK!

HE WOULD HAVE GONE WELL WITH ALMONDS!



SOON IN THE SINNAME CITY JAIL

HERE! JOIN THE REST OF THE LOCAL BLMS!

LOOK! I-I-T'S A DUCK!

NAKED AS A JAYBIRD!

WATCH IT! YA WANNA GET ME SUED? I'M WEARIN' PANTS!



BUT YOU ARE A DUCK RIGHT?

WE AIN'T EATEN LATELY!

EAT ME-- THE SURGEON GENERAL'S DETERMINED THAT DUCKS ARE HAZARDOUS TO YER HEALTH.

ALL RIGHT, BOYS -- BACK OFF!
WE CAN'T EAT A TALKING
DUCK!

WHEN I SAY
WHO ARE YOU GUYS?
YA DON'T LOOK LIKE
YER HARDEED
CRIMINAL 'SIES
IF YA KNOW WHAT
I MEAN

WE USED TO BE SWAMP
CITY HOME OWNERS FRIEND NOW
WE'RE IN DEBTORS PRISON

I'M **JOCK
DRISCOLL**, THE
URBAN ARCHITECT
WHO DESIGNED
SWAMP CITY

"I WAS THE ONLY
ONE WHO WAS
THREATENED BY THE
FUTURE -- A PLACE
WHERE ALL
AMERICANS COULD
AFFORD TO LIVE
AND HERE AND
RAISE THEIR
FAMILIES

"FOR NOW WE
LARGELY DON'T
OWN OUR OWN
AT HOME --
HEAD OF THE
ENGINEERS
WERE REAL
BENEFIT HAS
GAINED

"A -- THAT TAKES
OUR BLOOD --
MONKEYS --
DOES TAKE US

"LIVING IN A
AREA -- WE USE
WE PROTECT AS
A LEACH AND A CROOK!

ANNE: ANY LET
WE FINISH GOING
OVER THESE
BENEFITS WITH
MONK AND I'LL
BE RIGHT WITH
YOU!

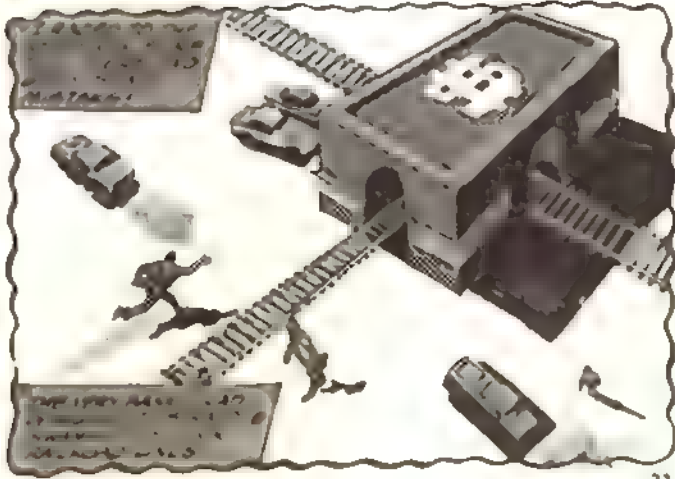
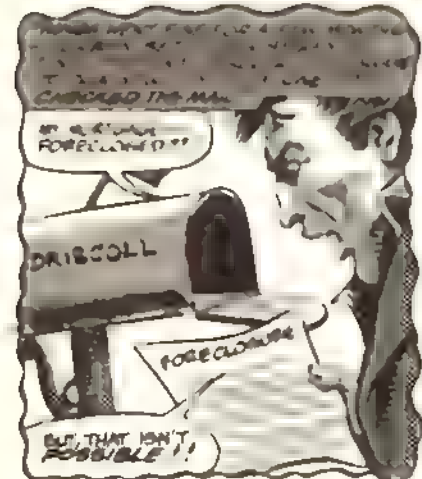
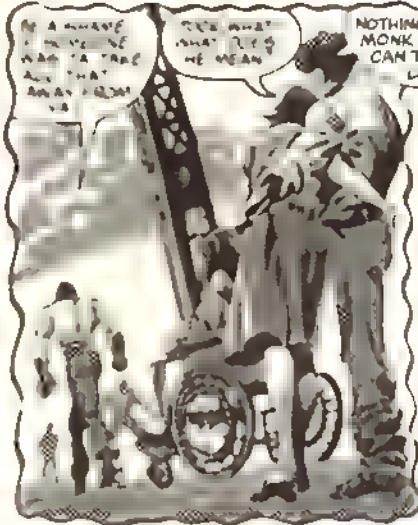
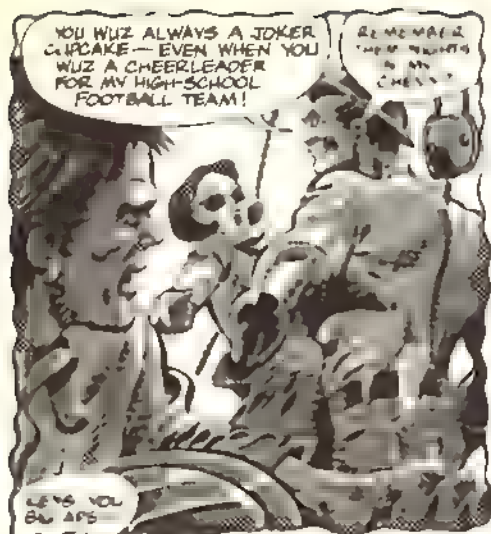
NORMALLY I
DON'T SEE WIVES
AN KIDS ON A
CONSTRUCTION
SITE --

LOOK
MOM --
THERE'S
DADDY

BUT A DAME AS LOVELY AS
ANNE DARROW DRISCOLL
IS WELCOME ANYWHERE!

YA REALLY
GET ME
OVERHEATED,
BABY!

CAREFUL
MONK YOU'LL
MELT YOUR
HARDHAT!



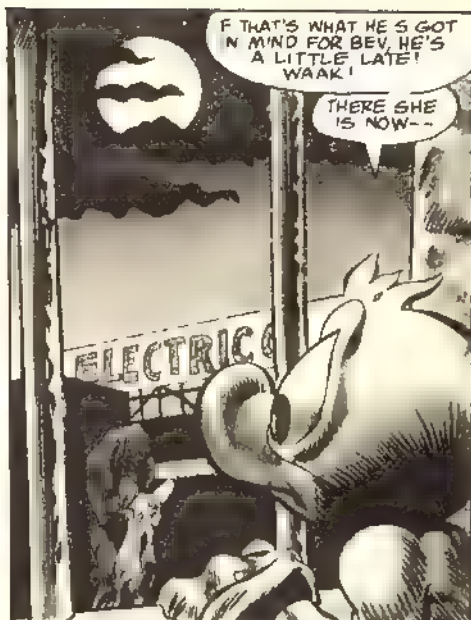


KONG MEANT EVERY WORD OF IT! HE BOUGHT UP THE WHOLE TOWN-- THE POLICE, THE BANK, THE LOCAL INSTITUTIONS-- EVERYTHING!

ANY WHO REFUSED TO PAY UP WERE EITHER FORCED TO LEAVE--OR ARRESTED OR ONE TELMPED UP CHARGE OR ANOTHER!

BUT BEV AN' I WERE JUST PASSIN THROUGH!

YOU CAME HERE WITH A LADY? FORGET HER! KONG'S LIKE A FEUDAL LORD-- HE DEMANDS THE "RIGHT OF THE FIRST NIGHT!"



F THAT'S WHAT HE'S GOT N MIND FOR BEV, HE'S A LITTLE LATE! WAAK!

THERE SHE IS NOW--

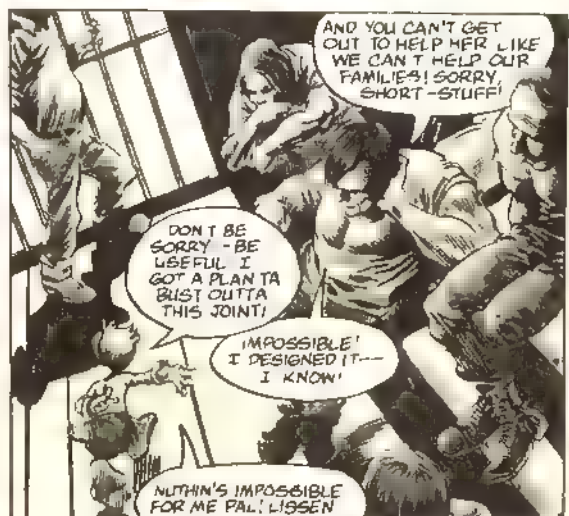


--STILL UNCONSCIOUS AN' STILL IN THE ARMS OF THAT SHUFFLIN' SLABO' SWAMPI!



BEV! WAKE UP, TOOTS!

NUTS! IT'S USELESS! SHE CAN'T HEAR ME!



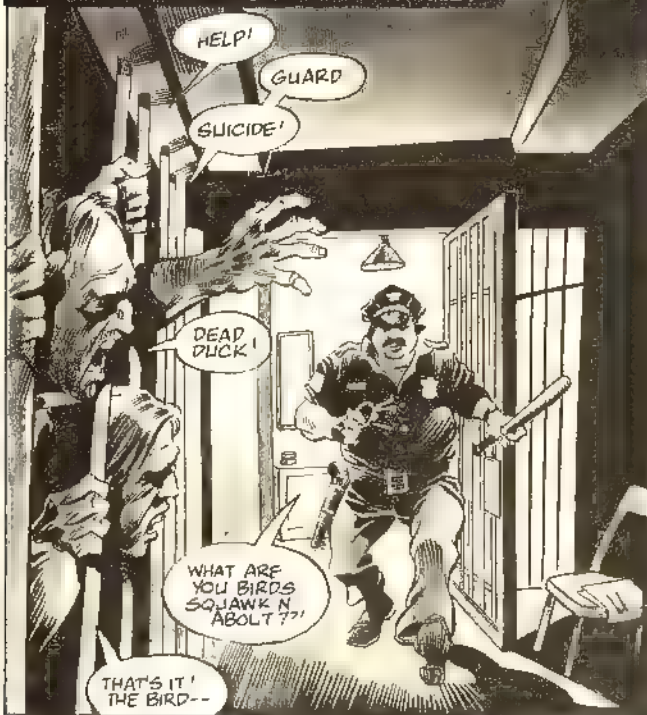
AND YOU CAN'T GET OUT TO HELP HER LIKE WE CAN'T HELP OUR FAMILIES! SORRY, SHORT-STUFF!

DON'T BE SORRY--BE USEFUL! I GOT A PLAN TA BUST OUTTA THIS JOINT!

'IMPOSSIBLE! I DESIGNED IT-- I KNOW!

NUTHIN'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME PAL! LISSEN

SOON AFTER HOWARD HAS EXPLAINED HIS ESCAPE PLAN TO HIS FELLOW INMATES, A COMMOTION BREAKS OUT IN HIS CELLBLOCK OF THE SWAMP CITY JAIL!



FOLLOWING HOWARD'S LEAD, THE PRISONERS LEAP OVER THE ASTONISHED GUARDIAN OF THE LAW... TO FREEDOM!

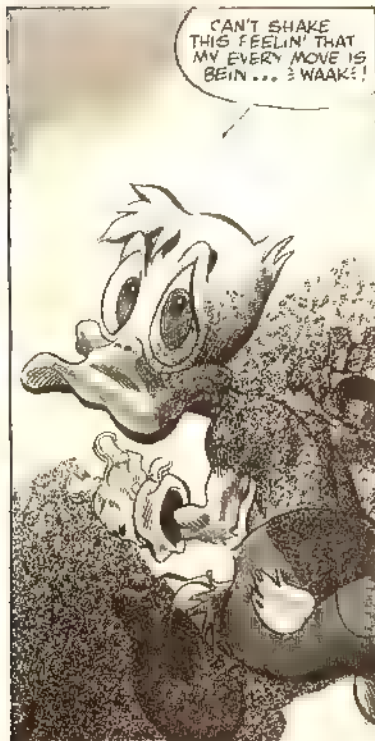


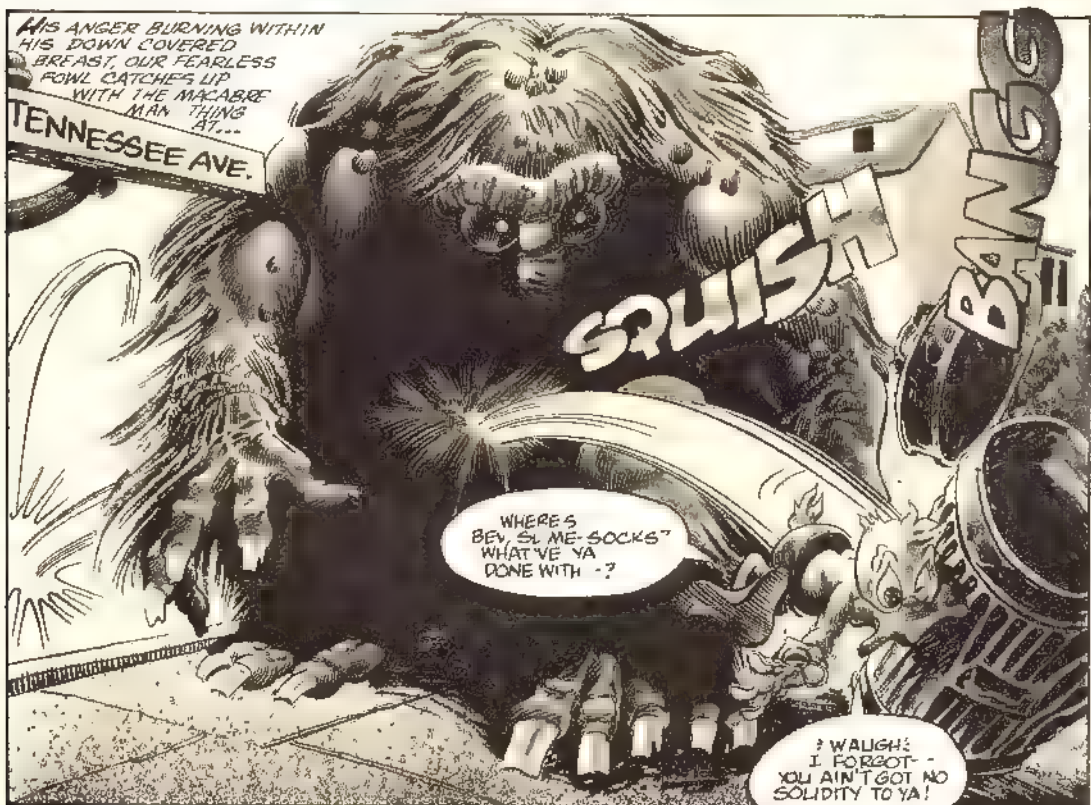
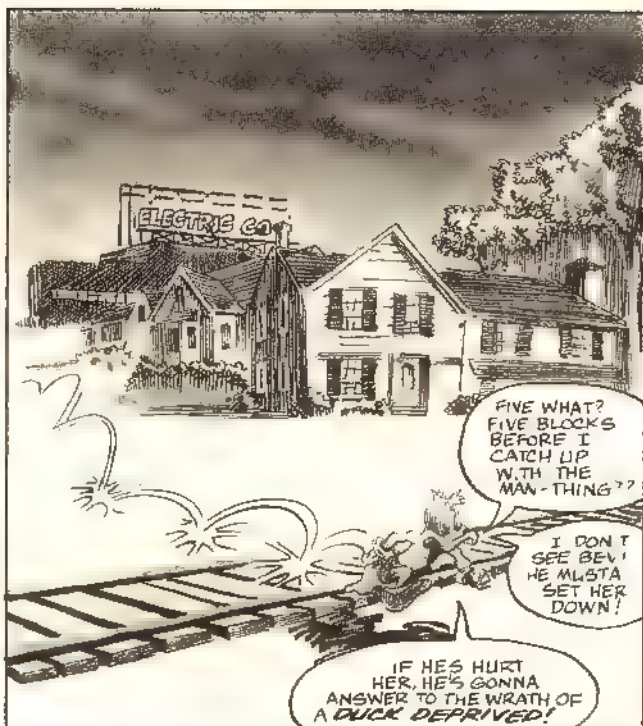
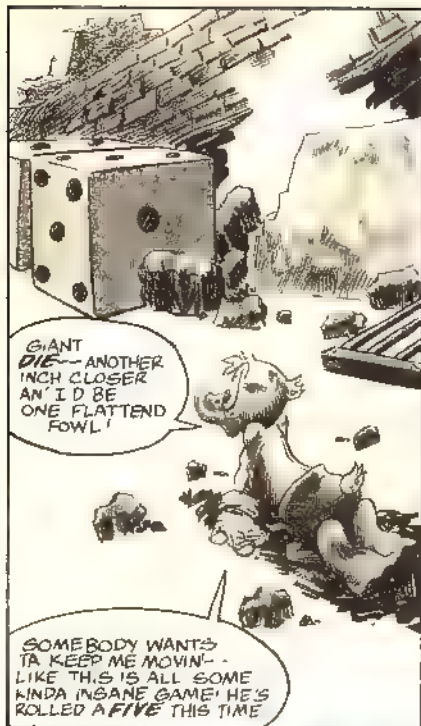
KEEPING TO THE SHADOWS ALONG ST CHARLES PLACE, STATES AND VIRGINIA AVENUES, HOWARD FINALLY SPIES THE MACABRE MAN-THING CROSSING THE TRACKS OFF THE SHORT LINE RAILROAD...

SOMETHIN FAMILIAR WITH THE LAYOUT OF THIS BERG!

IF I COULD ONLY FIGURE OUT WHAT??!

BUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS GETTIN BEV AWAY FROM THE MAN-THING!





CHAPTER TWO BRING BACK MY BABY TO ME!!

THE ALIVE BABY CRIES
IN ANOTHER TOWN
AND CONFRONTS THE
MACABRE MAN!!



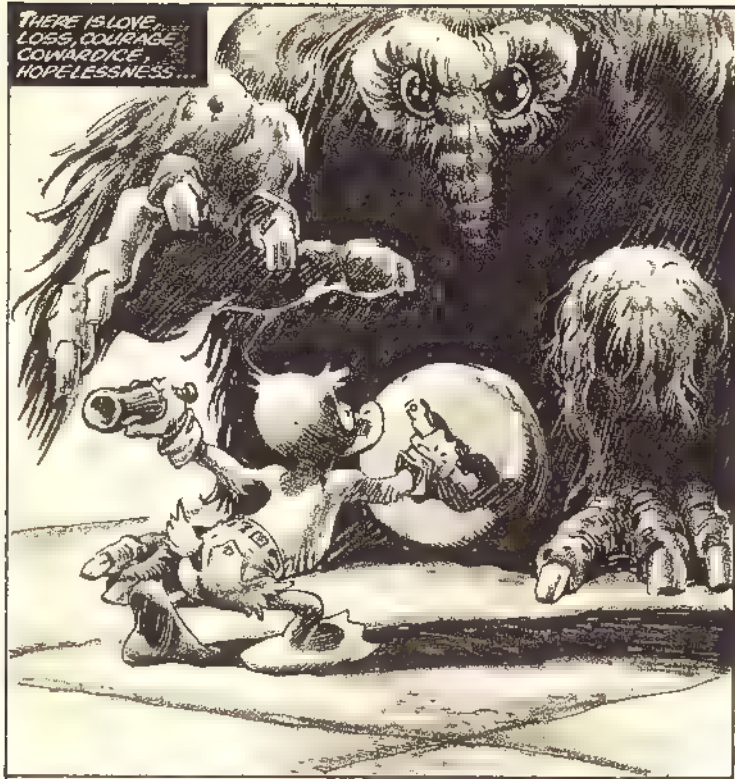
I'M STARRA
AND I'M
WANTING
MY BABY
BACK!!

NO ANSWER
EH? AWRIGHT, YOU
WANTING AT ME
BECAUSE I
WANT MY
BABY BACK!!

AN XIE
MEET ME
WANTING I
WANT AN I AM I
WANTING YA
WANT

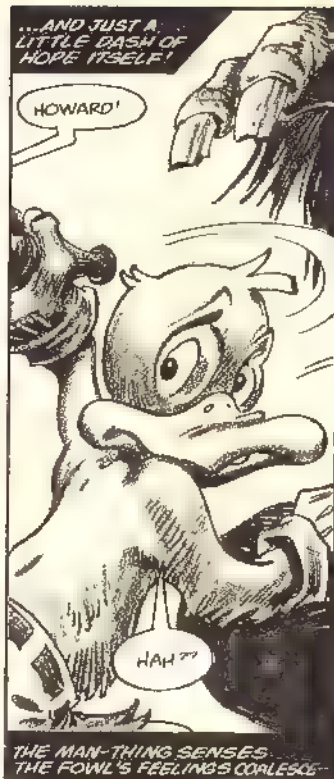
THE ALIVE BABY CRIES IN ANOTHER TOWN AND CONFRONTS THE MACABRE MAN-- BUT A LOT OF CHILDREN

THERE IS LOVE,
LOSS, COURAGE,
COWARDICE,
HOPELESSNESS...



...AND JUST A
LITTLE DASH OF
HOPE ITSELF!

HOWARD!



HAH??

THE MAN-THING SENSES
THE FOWL'S FEELINGS' CORPUSCLE

—INTO ADORATION FOR
THE WOMAN ON THE PORCH!

BEV!



TOOTS IS IT REALLY
YOU - ALIVE,
AWAKE,
DRESSED!?



IS ME, DUCKY!
THE MAN-THING
BROUGHT ME HERE

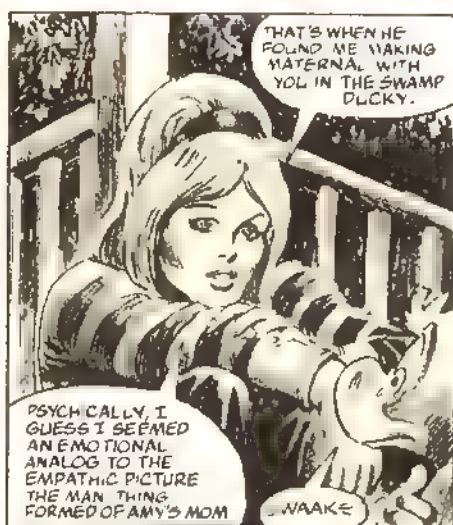
--TO BE
AMY'S
MOTHER!



I, AH, THINK YA'D
BETTER EXPLAIN
THIS ONE FROM
THE TOP,
BEV!

IS THIS YOUR FRIEND,
BEVERLY? GEE, YOU DIDN'T
TELL ME HE WAS A DUCK!





AFTER ALL, I DID RUN INTO THE KID'S DAD IN THE CITY JAIL, AN' THEIR STORIES JIBE!



OKAY, SO AS A STAND IN ANOTHER YA'VE SATISFIED THE KID'S PSYCHIC LONGIN' -- NOW WHAT? I MEAN, WHAT GOES ON IN SWAMP CITY STILL AIN'T ANY OF OUR BUSINESS!



FIRST OF ALL, DUCKY, WE HAVEN'T GOT THE MONEY TO GO ANYPLACE ELSE!

SECOND, AMY NEEDS OUR HELP, AND, THIRD -



--THOSE FUNNY LITTLE MEN IN THEIR WALL STREET TUXEDOS ARE BACK!

WAUGH!



NO! THEY'RE THE SAME ONES WHO STOLE MY MOMMY AND DADDY!

WHOA, KIDDO! I KNOW ON THE EAFRAY!

YA WANT THE MAN THING TO GO AFTER THEM NOT US!

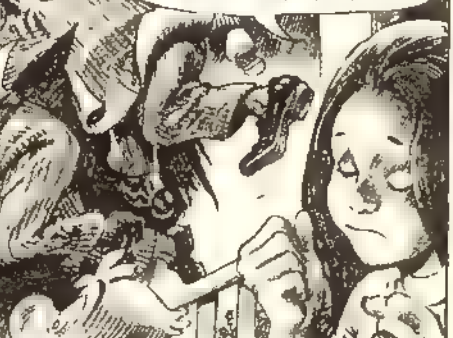
OH, RIGHT!



SUNNUVA DUCK -- SHE'S RIGHT! THE KID MUST BE PSYCHIC!

WHICH WOULD EXPLAIN SLIME CAKES ALWAYS SEEMIN' TA DO WHAT SHE WANTS,

BUT I'M NOT SCARED ANYWAY CAUSE I KNOW THAT THE SAME SWAMP ANGEL WHO BROUGHT BEVERLY TO BE MY MOMMY WILL PROTECT ME!



UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE SWAMP CITY SHAREHOLDERS, THEY CANNOT TURN OFF THEIR FEAR LIKE TAP-WATER...

...AND, REPEAT AFTER ME, WHOEVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT THE MAN-THING'S TOUCH!

YAAGHH!

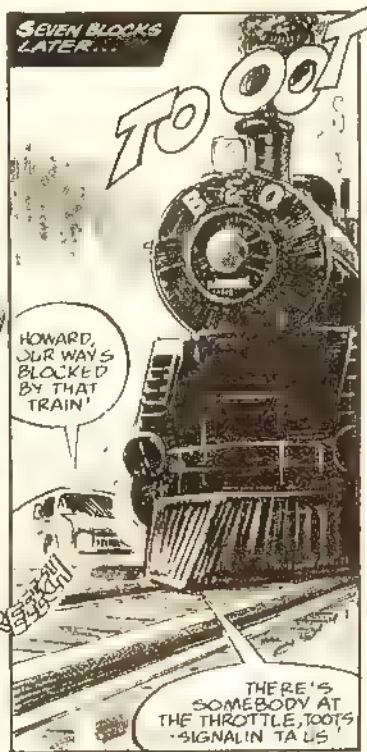
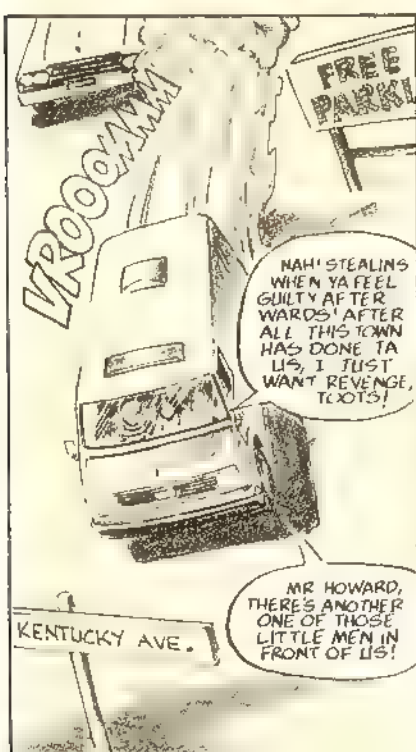
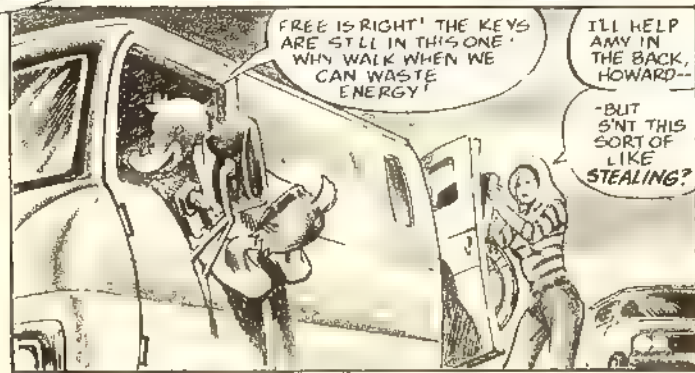
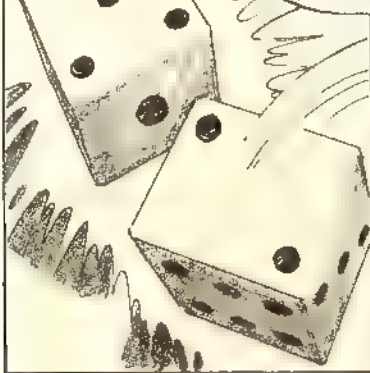
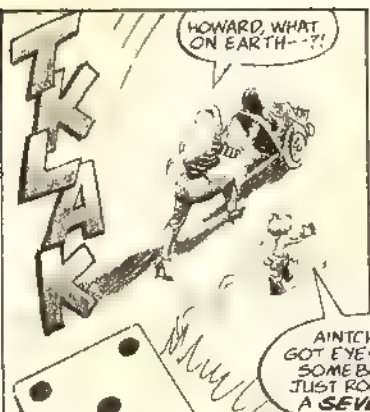
HOWARD, THE MAN-THING'S HOLDING THE LITTLE MEN OFF --

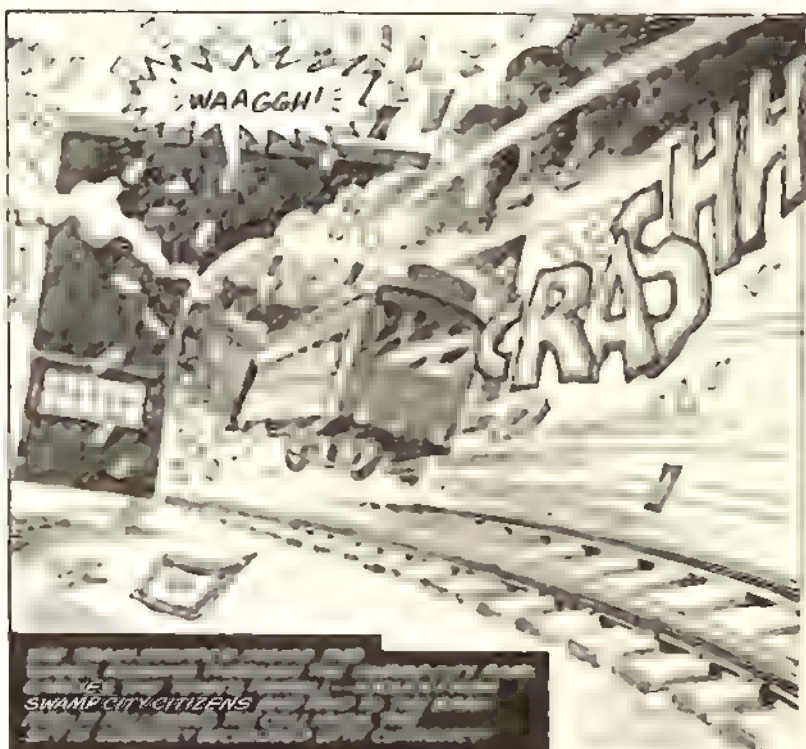
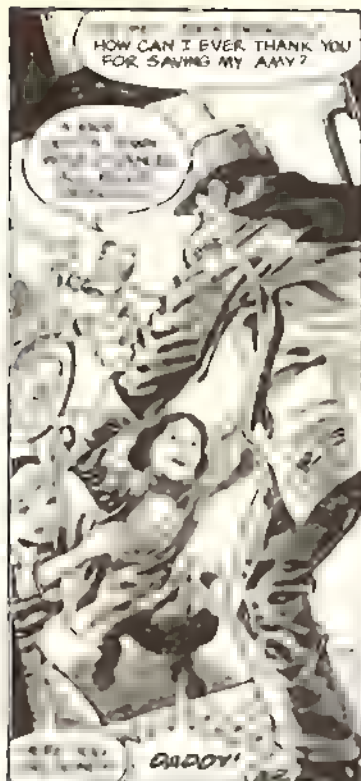
"GIVING US TIME TO ESCAPE WITH AMY!"

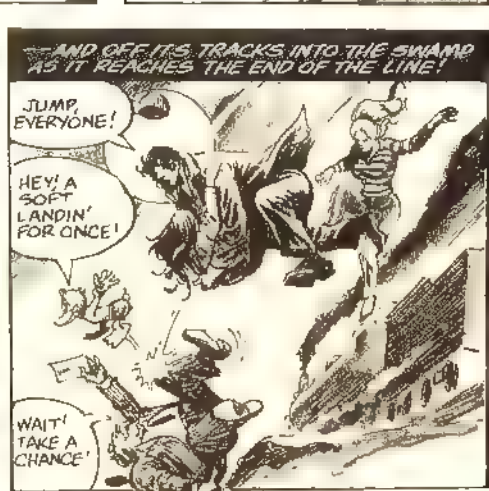
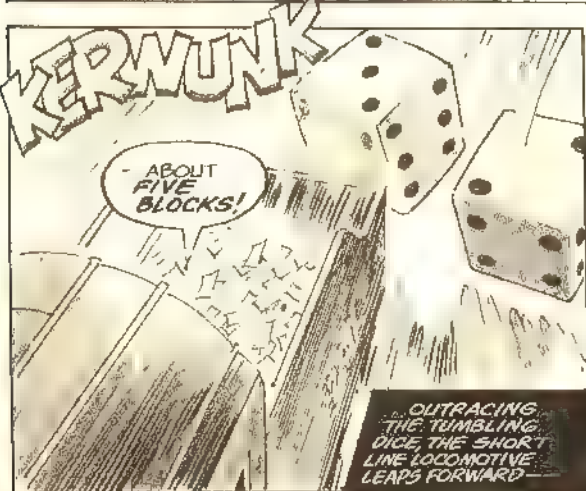
UNCLE HOWARD AUNT BEVERLY -- ARE WE GOING TO FIND MY MOMMY AND DADDY?

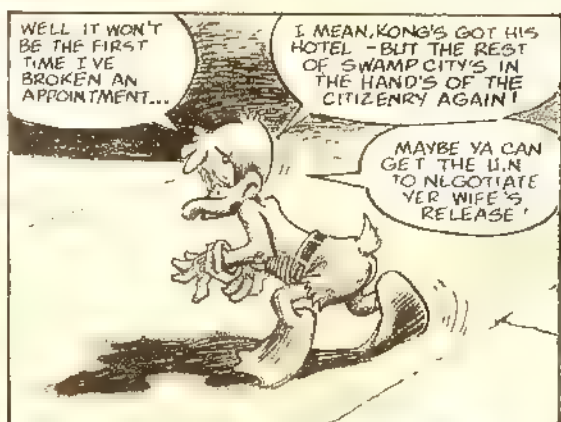
YEAH, K, DDO-SURE - THAT'S EXACTLY WHERE WE'RE GOIN'. AS SOON AS WE PUT SOME SPACE BETWEEN US AN THE SWAMP CITY GESTAPO!

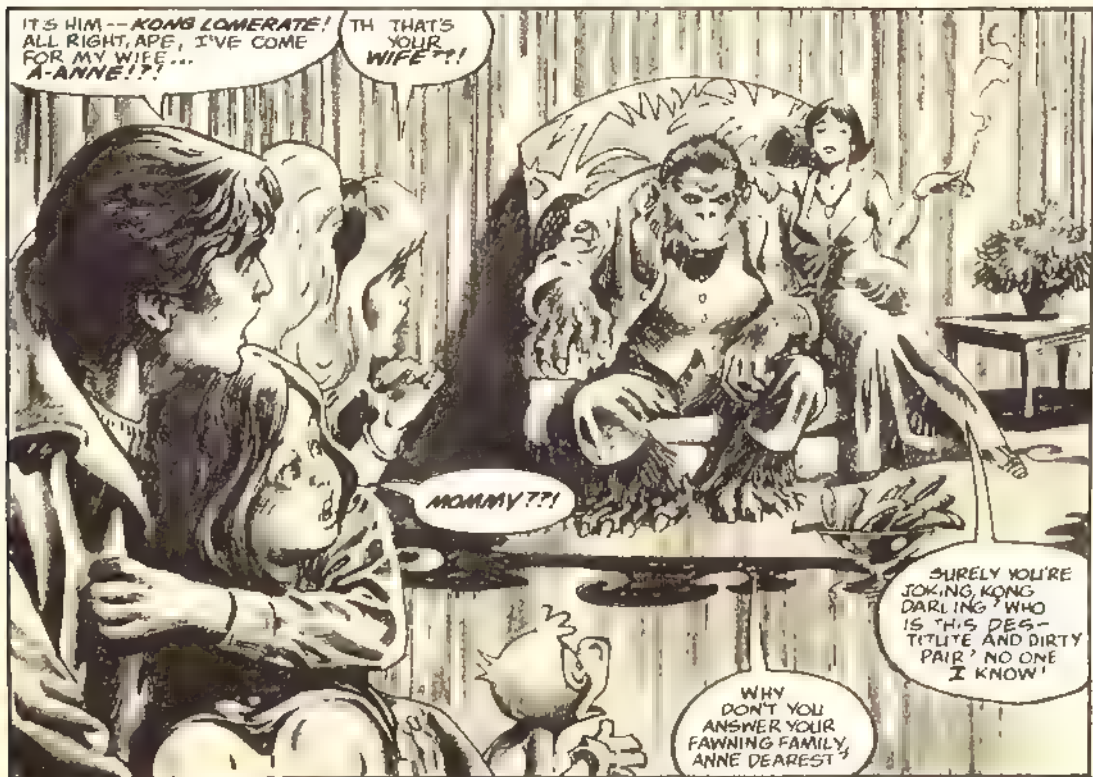
UH-OH! THAT SHADOW! I'LL BET IT'S -!











ANNE - IT'S US, JOCK
AND AMY! WE'VE
COME TO TAKE YOU
HOME!

HEW! 'BUT
I AM
HOME!

KONG, YOU MONSTER!
YOU'VE BRAINWASHED
MY WIFE!

THE SHOCK OF
TEARING HER
FROM THE BOSOM
OF HER FAMILY
MUST'VE MADE
HER SUSCEPTIBLE
TO YOUR
POISONOUS
PERSUASION!

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH,
DRISCOLL! YOU FORGET!
I KNEW ANNE DARROW
INTIMATELY BEFORE
SHE BECAME MRS
JOCK DRISCOLL!!

I KNEW SHE
COULD NEVER BE
HAPPY, A MERE
HALF-BRAIN ISOLA-
TED IN THIS WOOD-
FORSAKEN SWAMP!

SO I
BROUGHT HER HERE -
LET HER SEE WHAT LIFE
COULD BE LIKE IN THE LAP
OF LUXURY. TOLD HER
IT COULD ALL BE HER'S.
IF SHE'D WANT TO
BE THE BRIDE OF KONG!

BEHOLD MY **TOWER OF
POWER!** A MOUNTAIN OF
MILK, WAVE JEWELS, VIDEO
TAPE, CELL PHONES, NAIL
POLISHERS, HOME
APPLIANCES!

WHAT RICHES CAN YOU
OFFER ANNE TO COMPARE
WITH THESE?

DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
I DIDN'T NEED TO
STEAL YOUR WIFE
FROM YOU!

ALL THAT
WAS NECESSARY
WAS TO **BUY**
HER BODY
AND SOUL!

VIDEOTAPES!
VEGETABLES!
VIEWFINDERS!







CHAPTER THREE

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND
HOW THE PLOT?

ARMED TO THE TEETH
AND WITH A
REPUTATION FOR
BEING A
RELIABLE
SOURCE OF
INFORMATION
TO THE
FEDERAL BUREAU
OF INVESTIGATION
AND TO THE
ARMED AND
DANGEROUS
ELEMENTS OF
THE
COUNTRY

UNDERSTANDING HIS METHOD OF
COWLING THE EMOTIONS OF
OTHERS HAS USUALLY PROVEN
PHOTOGRAPHICALLY PERMANENT

A MAJOR CASE IS
BEING
HANDLED
BY
THE
FEDERAL BUREAU
OF INVESTIGATION
AND TO THE
ARMED AND
DANGEROUS
ELEMENTS OF
THE
COUNTRY

MEANWHILE, ON
THE PATIO BELOW...

JOCK-- WHERE AM I? WHY
ARE YOU SLAPPING ME?
OH, GOD-- AMY! MY LITTLE
GIRL-- N DANGER

LOOKS LIKE ANNE
DRISCOLL'S COMIN'
BACK FROM
ELECTRIC
LADYLAND!

THAT'S
WHAT I'VE BEEN
TRYING TO TELL YOU--
BUT YOU'VE BEEN LOST IN
DREAMS OF APPLIANCES!

SUDDENLY...



? WAUGH?
I STEPPED
BACKWARDS
IN THE NICK
OF PRIME-TIME!



THE TOWER OF POWER-- IT'S
STARTING TO COME APART
UNDER THE COMBINED WEIGHT
OF KONG AND THE MAN-
THING!

OH DUCKY--
IF IT SHOULD
COLLAPSE,
AMY WOULD
NEVER SURVIVE
THE FALL!



SOMEBODY'S GOT TO GO UP
THERE AND HELP HER DOWN--
SOMEBODY
LIGHT ENOUGH TO NOT MAKE THE
TOWER TOPPLE ANY FASTER!

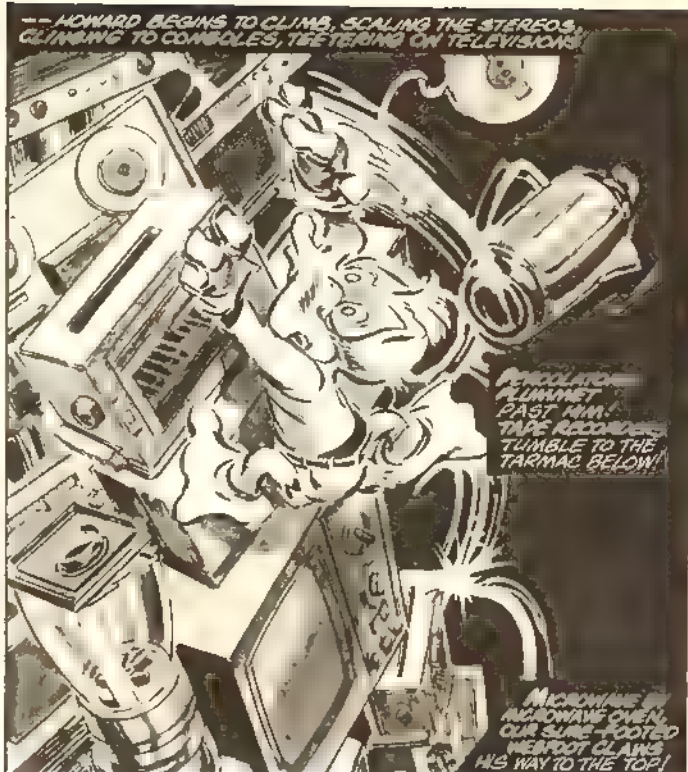


SOMEBODY
LIKE... YOU,
HOWARD!

TOOTS, I MAY'VE
BEEN DEPRESSED
LATELY-- BUT I AIN'T
ADVANCED TO SUICIDAL!



TOSSED AT THE TOPPLING TOWER
BY HIS BELOVED BEVERLY—



—HOWARD BEGINS TO CLIMB, SCALING THE STEREOS,
CLIMBING TO CONSOLES, TEETERING ON TELEVISIONS—

PERCULATED
FLUMMET
PAST HIM!
TAKE RECOILERS
TUMBLE TO THE
TARMAC BELOW!

MICROWAVE BY
MICROWAVE OVEN,
OUR SLUG-FOOTED
WEAPOT CLAWS
HIS WAY TO THE TOP!

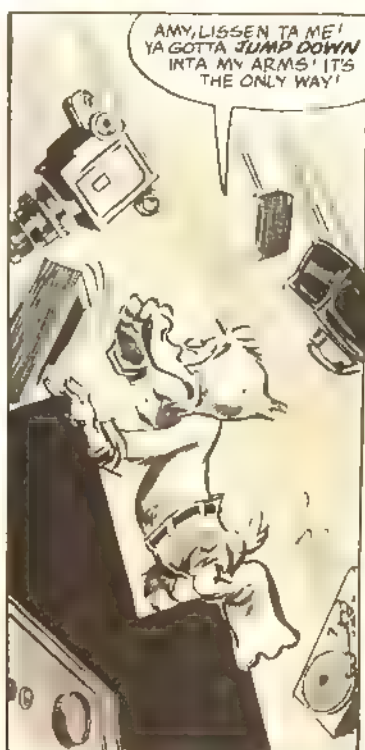


MR HOWARD,
HELP ME!

THAT'S WHAT THEY
SENT ME UP HERE
TA DO KIDDS!

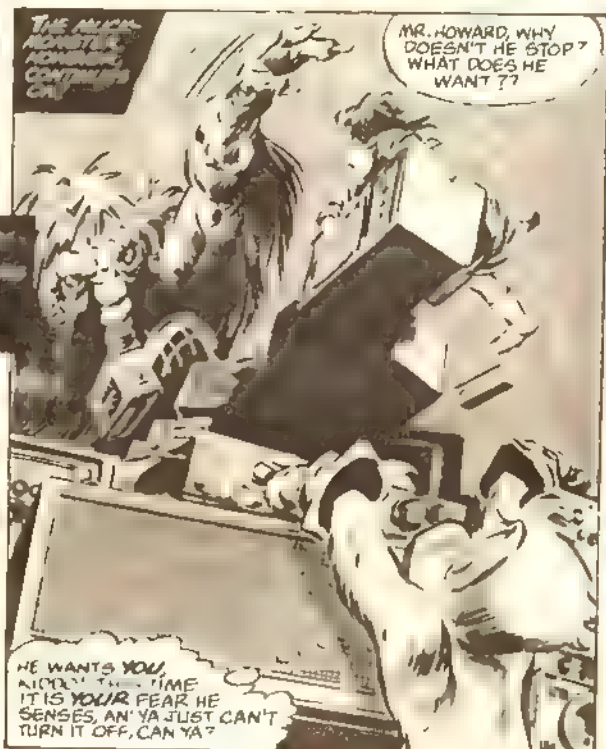
BUT HOW? TA
REACH AMY I
GOTTA GET PAST
KONG--AN THE
MAN-THINGS
TIPPIN' THE
TOWER FURTHER
WITH EACH
PASSIN
SECOND!

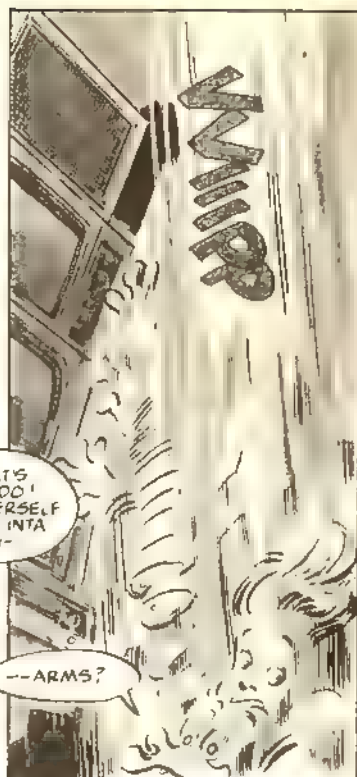
ONLY
ONE
CHANCE...



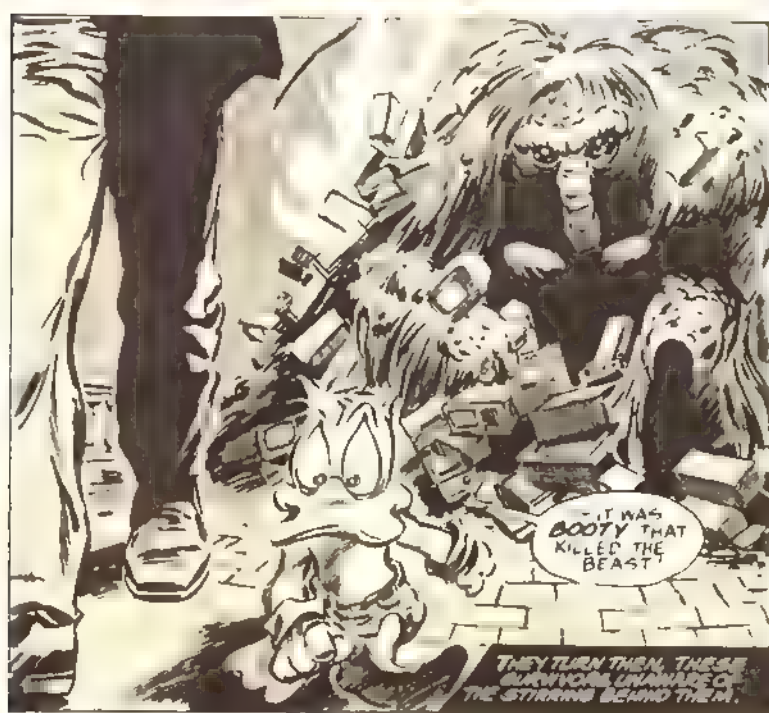
AMY, LISSIN TA ME!
YA GOTTA JUMP DOWN
INTO MY ARMS! IT'S
THE ONLY WAY!







COME DOWN IT DOES, IN AN AVALANCHE OF APPLIANCES
A MIND STUNNING COLLAPSE OF MATERIAL GOODS
BURYING BOTH THE MAN-THING—



UNSEEN, DARKER BEASTS
NO MOVING TOWARD, TO
WHICH HIS EMPATHIC
BEING MIGHT RESPOND—



EPILOGUE: A FEW DAYS LATER, OUR FOWL AND HIS FRIENDS STAND ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF SWAMP CITY, FACING THE FUTURE DOWN FLORIDA'S ROUTE 41...

WE'RE SORRY YOL AND HOWARD HAVE CHOSEN TO LEAVE SO SOON BEVERLY

YOL, ANNE AMY AND ALL OF SWAMP CITY HAVE BEEN GREAT TO US JOCK -- BUT HOWARD AND I HAVE DECIDED TO KEEP ON MOVING, TO DISCOVER AMERICA

YEAH, TA LOOK FOR OUR RUTS!

THAT'S ROOTS, HOWARD.

KIDDO, WHEN YOU'VE FALLEN INTO AS MANY DUMB SITUATIONS AS WE HAVE BELIEVE ME, IT'S RUTS!

WELL, ANNE'S GIVEN YOU SOME CLOTHES, AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD KIDS SCROUNGED UP AN OUTFIT FOR HOWARD...

BUT TAKE THIS AS A TOKEN OF OUR THANKS

HORRAY! SOLVENCY!

BIDDING THE DRISCOLLS A FOND FAREWELL, HOWARD AND BEV BOARD THE WAITING BUS.

AH, MONEY! I WAS AFRAID THE GOOD CITIZENS OF SWAMP CITY WERE GONNA WINE US AN DINE US THEN SHIP US OUT WITHOUT A PAYOFF!

HOWARD, I'M SURPRISED AT YOU! WE HELPED THE DRISCOLLS OUT! I WAS SURE THEY'D HELP US IN RETURN!

DON'T BLAME ME TOOTS! I DIDN'T DECIDE THAT DOUGH, IS THE THING THAT WOULD MAKE BOTH OUR WORLDS GO ROUND!

YA EITHER HAVE IT OR YA... UH-OH!

SCREEEEEE

WAUGH!

THE-THE DRIVER THREW US OFF THE BUS! BUT WHY???

WHY? BECAUSE OUR 'FRIENDS' PAID US OFF IN WORTHLESS SWAMP CITY CURRENCY, THAT'S WHY!

OH, WHAT THE HECK, DUCKY--- MONEY ISN'T EVERYTHING! WE'VE STILL GOT EACH OTHER, RIGHT?

TELL THAT TO YER FEET, TOOTS. IF WE EVER REACH THE END OF THIS LONG AN WINDIN ROAD!

WAAKE WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE FOR A GOOD CIGAR!

MIAMI
← 50 MILES

~ End ~

Duck Of Many Faces

By Bill Mantlo

There must be something about HOWARD THE DUCK that brings out the best in artists. When we asked several of the leading illustrators in the comic mag business to contribute to our FAMOUS ARTISTS' PORTFOLIO, the response was both immediate and inspired. In fact, so much interest was generated that we may publish another portfolio in the future for those whose work didn't make it in this time.

For this ish, words just aren't adequate to describe MARIE SEVERIN's Dashiell Hammettesque CHEAP DUCKTECTIVE, with BEV as Mary Astor and HOWARD as the brash and brazen Bogart. (And is that Peter Lorre with the rabbit ears framed outside the door?)

Then there's Wondrous WALT SIMONSON doing a reprise of his "Alien" adaptation with SNAILIAN — a super-slug menacing our mallard and maid aboard a freighter to the stars.

What can we say about MARSHALL ROGERS' parody of our Distinguished Competitor's Darknight Detective? All the elements of a successful parody are there — the sky-stabbing Duck Signal, the marvelous Duckmobile — as HOWARD and BEV adopt the habits of DUCK-MAN and DUCK-GIRL to strike fowl fear into the hardened arteries of those whose hearts are too atrophied to care. DUCK-MAN is also the basis of next issue's hilarious festcapade.

JOHN BYRNE, whose work on Marvel's X-MEN, FANTASTIC FOUR, and CAPTAIN AMERICA has established a new criteria of excellence tries his hand at illustrating and embellishing with HOWARD (not Carter) breaking the curse of King Tut's tomb. Well, Tut was a boy-king, and, at the sight of BEV after all those years, even Mummy's boys will be boys (Ouch!).

HOWARD ("Fast Hands") CHAYKIN finishes off this edition of the FAMOUS ARTISTS' PORTFOLIO with a scene out of a Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers musical, casting HOWARD and BEV as those light-on-their feet lovers of Hollywood's Golden Age. Actually, we had wanted Howie to do a Busby Berkeley routine, replete with hundreds of frenzied fowl in various stages of undress, but he calmly slicked back his brilliantined locks and, fixing an eye on Editor Lynn Graeme, said, "Okay, baby, but I charge a buck a duck." Even Marvel, unfortunately, has budgetary limits.

That's it for this installment. We've got some ideas for which artists to feature next time, but we'd also like to hear suggestions from you Duckophiles. Is there any Famous Artist whose rendition of HOWARD THE DUCK would simply blow you away? If so, drop a line to WISE QUACKS--FAMOUS ARTISTS PORTFOLIO and we'll contact those ladies or gents whose work you clamor for.





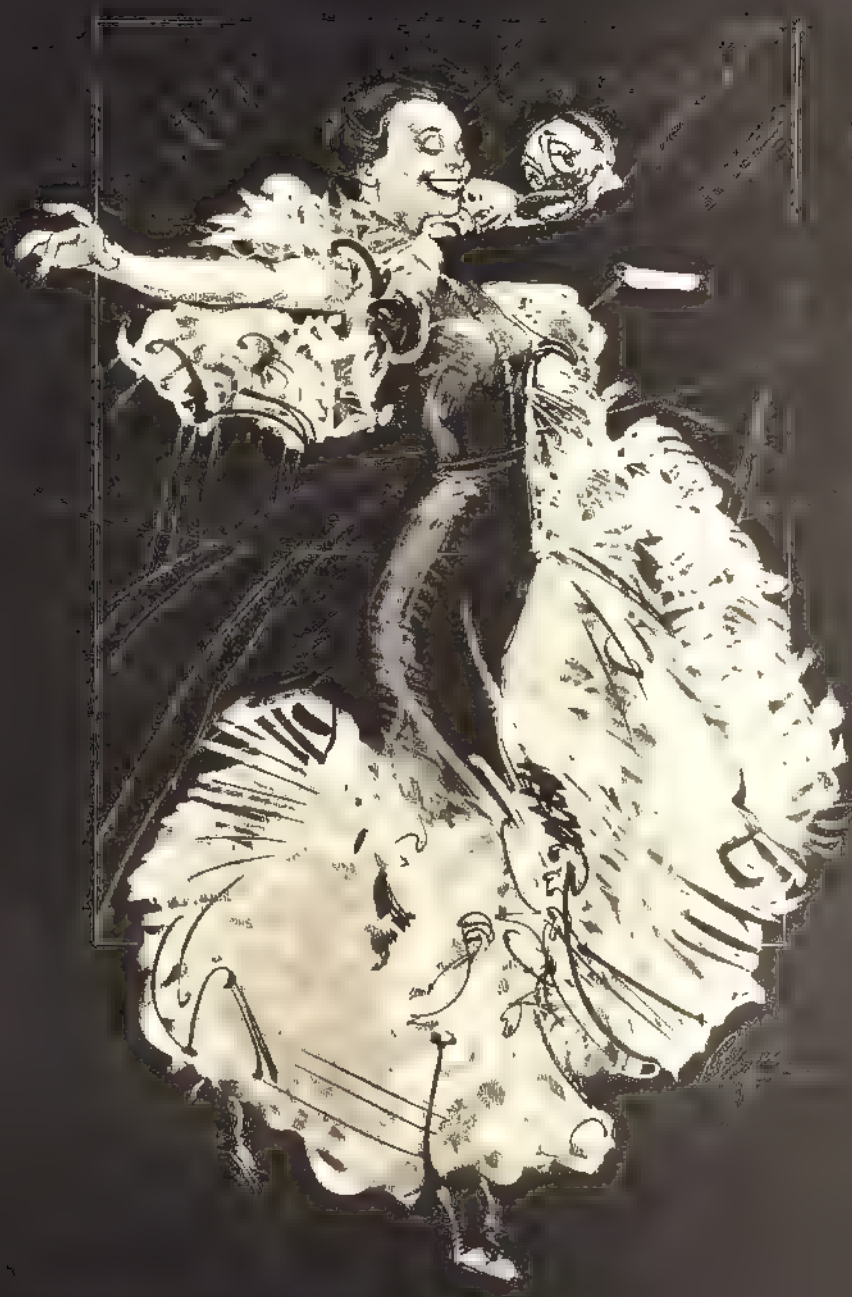
THE CHEAP DETECTIVE • MARIE SEVERIN



KING DUK'S TOMB • JOHN BYRNE







FRED 'N GINGER • HOWIE CHAYKIN

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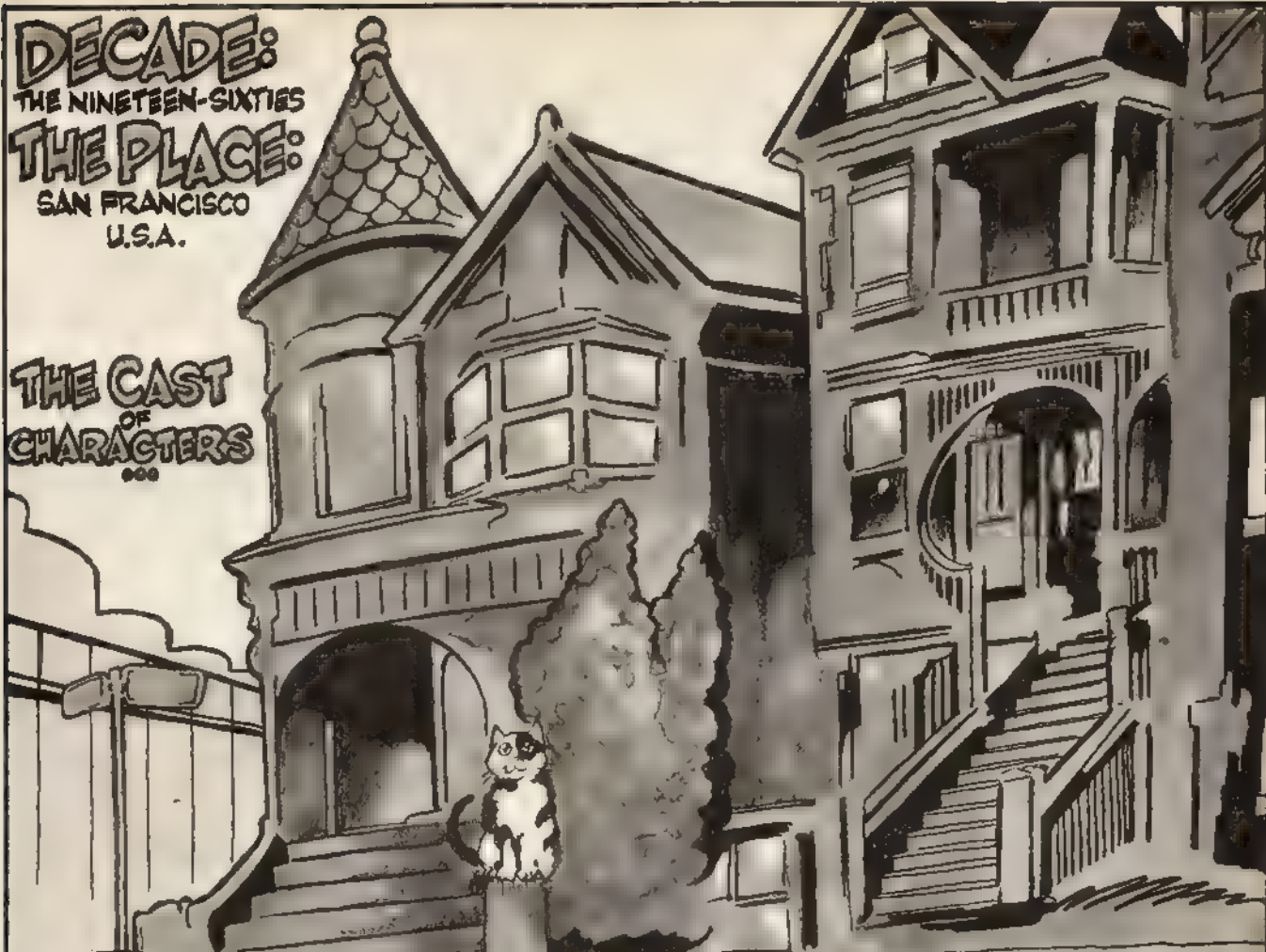
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DECADE:
THE NINETEEN-SIXTIES
THE PLACE:
SAN FRANCISCO
U.S.A.

THE CAST
OF
CHARACTERS
000



STREET PEEPLE



CHEYANNE



MOONCHILD



QWAMI



RIFF

TALL, BLONDE, CALIFORNIAN, HIP! THIS WOMAN KNOWS BUT ONE FEAR: ANYONE REVEALING THAT SHE IS IN REALITY LESLIE ANN BROWN, EX-PROM QUEEN, CHEERLEADER AND GLEE CLUB CAPTAIN FROM PONTIAC, MICHIGAN!

DID YOU KNOW THAT **FAT** PEOPLE, BY AND LARGE, ARE MORE SENSITIVE, AFFECTIONATE, PASSIONATE AND SEXY THAN THIN PEOPLE? IT'S TRUE! NOW IF THE WORLD WOULD ONLY ADMIT THIS IN HER LIFETIME!

TO SOME, ONE LIFE IS NOT ENOUGH, ONE TIMES PAN IS TOO SHORT! FOR SUCH AS THESE, THE WHOLE WORLD IS PART OF THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL SPACE. IF THEY DON'T LIKE THE WORLD THE WAY IT IS, THEY CHANGE IT!

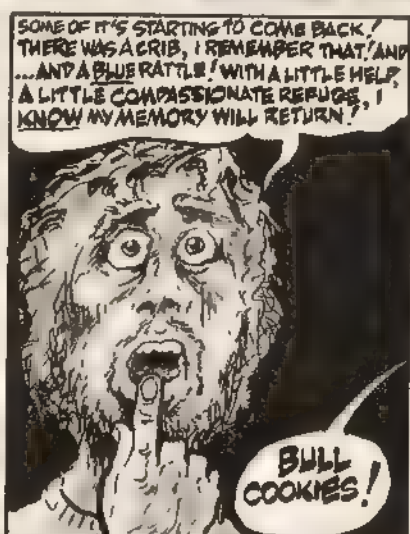
AND FOR SOME, LIFE IS AN ENDLESS SLIPPING AND SLIDING AWAY FROM REALITY: INTO METAPHYSICS, INTO DRUGS, INTO ANYTHING THAT PROMISES SOMETHING ELSE. THESE ARE THE DREAMERS, THE SEARCHERS...

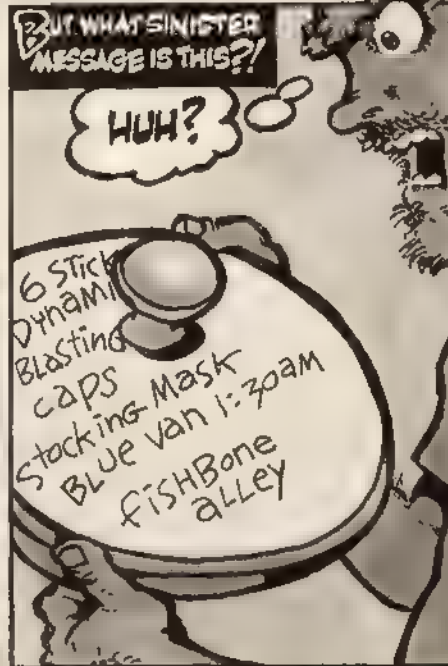
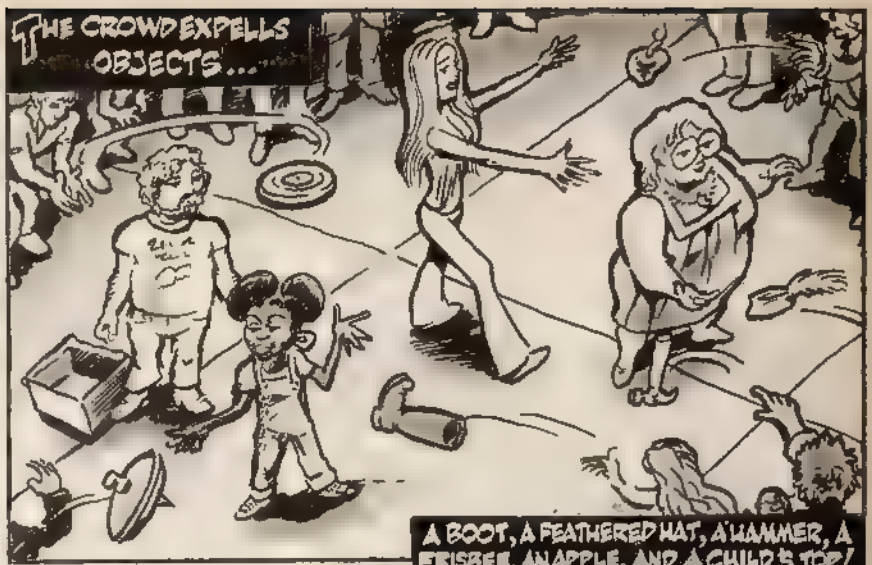
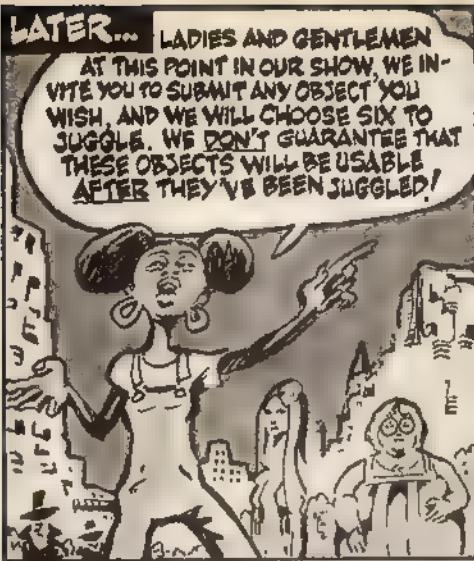
STORY BY
LYNN
GRAEME

DYNAMITE, BABY!!

ART BY
NED
SONNTAG

THANKS TO LUCY FOR THE MONTBLANC





THAT EVENING THERE'S A BLAST AT THE STREET PEOPLE PAD...

GOT TO GET NEXT TO THIS CHICK!

SHE'S LIKE A DIAMOND, AND HE TREATS HER LIKE GLASS!

...AND SHE LIKES HIM!

OH WELL!

HEAVENLY HASH, ALL!

THAT CHICK YOU WAS CRASHIN' WITH, SHE AIN'T SO GOOD... SPEED FREAKS, MAN, THEY NEVER LAST! A BURNOUT, RIGHT? GOT PICKED UP BY THE MAN... WHEW! HEAVY!

...MAYBE IT'S TRUE THAT BODHISATVAS LIKE GOD, WORK IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS! COULD IT BE THAT THE TORMENT THROUGH WHICH SHE PUTS ME IS TO BE THE INSTRUMENT OF MY ULTIMATE ENLIGHTENMENT?!

CHAIN CHAIN CHAIN
CHAIN OF FOO-OOLS

GOLLY! YA LOOK ALL BUMMED OUT!! DON'T GET SO HEAVY, OKAY?

RIPP DECIDES TO MEDITATE UPON HIS MISERIES...

BUT TRANSCENDING THE MUNDANE IS NOT ALWAYS EASY...

?

SAVE THE WHALE

DYNAMITE
DYNAMITE

HUH?!

SO QWANN'S GOT SOME BOXES... SO THEY'RE FILLED WITH DYNAMITE... SO THESE PEOPLE GAVE HER A TOP WITH A BATTLE PLAN ON IT! THERE MIGHT BE A PERFECTLY INNOCENT EXPLANATION!!

I GOT BAD VIBES ABOUT THIS WHOLE THING!!

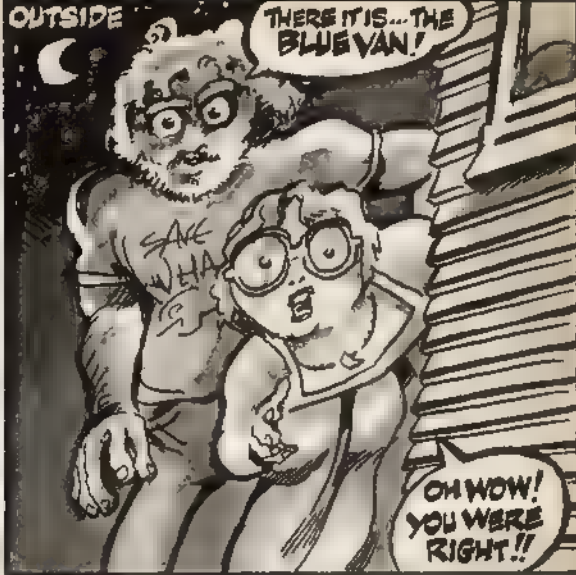
BYONE A.M. ALL IS SILENT AND DARK IN THE STREET PEEPLE-PAD

IN FOUR BEDS LIE FOUR MUDDLED SHAPES...BUT ONLY ONE OF THEM...CHEYANNE...IS REAL! THE OLD FELLOW TRICK!



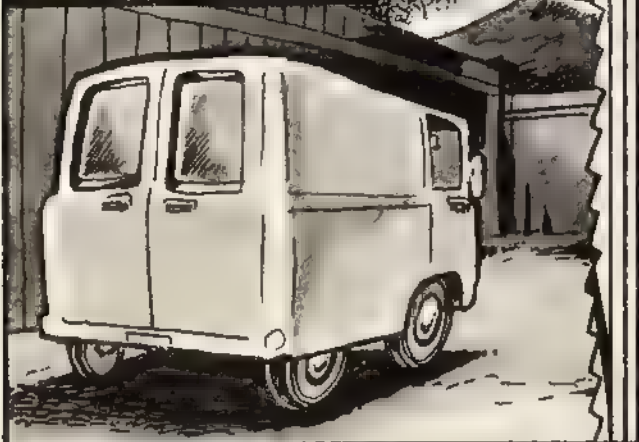
OUTSIDE

THERE IT IS...THE BLUE VAN!



YES THE BLUE VAN, THE MEANS OF DESTRUCTION FOR THE UNITED STATES BANK, FOR GWAMI AND HER FELLOW REVOLUTIONARIES INTEND TO BLOW IT UP!

FISHBON ALLEY



BUT...

GET OUTTA HERE MAN! THE FEDS ARE ONTO US...THEY'RE WATCHING THE VAN!

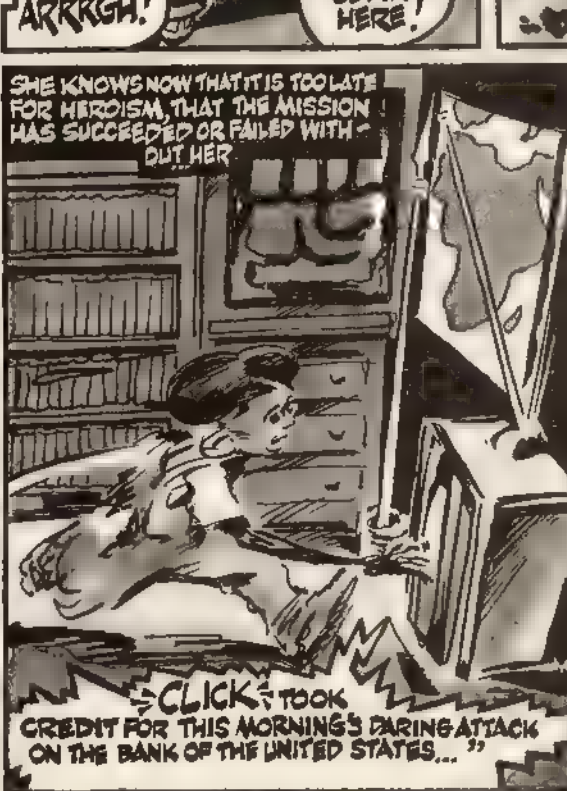
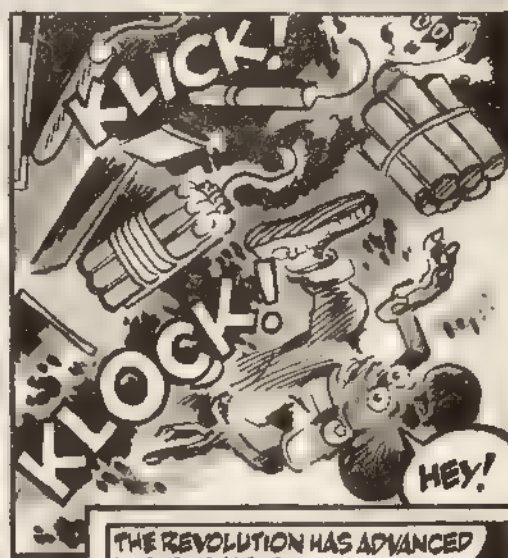
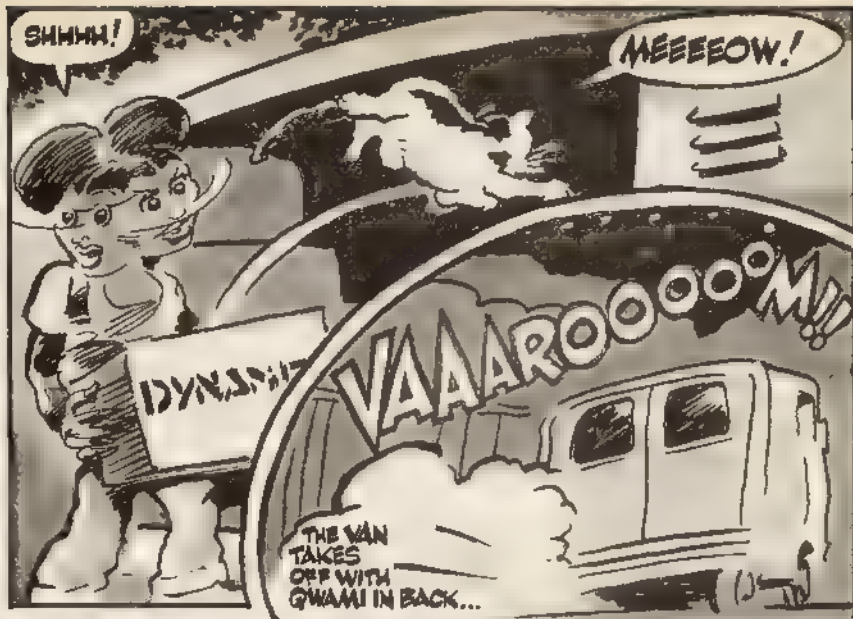


FEDS!! INTERNATIONAL FASCIST CONSPIRACY!



I COULD GET INTO THIS WHOLE THING AND BE KOOL... BUT THIS STOCKING BELONGS TO HER...MY DEITY! OH, EXCRUCIATING BLISS!!





Wise Quackers

Dear Lynn and Co.,

I'm afraid I can give the Howard /Playduck (HOWARD THE DUCK #4) issue only a mixed review. The original conception was okay, particularly in view of what seems to be Howard's newfound "kinky" status, but the final product from your Bullpen "cast of thousands" was a bit disappointing. The non-cartoon features ranged in humorous quality from the level usually attained by MAD magazine to the pits usually plumbed by high school yearbooks. (I'll let you decide which ranks lowest.)

I did like the Truman Capoultry interview, mainly because of its insights into Howard's life before the big shift in the Cosmic Axis. The conclusions drawn about Howard's character and the nature of the Cosmic Axis itself seemed quite logical; I would not mind seeing them followed up on. I also liked "The Drake's Tale." Who wrote it?

Byrne's and Tartaglione's pin-up was quite yummy. Can anyone give me Ms. Quackton's address? I could go for some Peking Duck.

As for "The Maltese Cockroach," it wasn't the detective parody to end all detective parodies ('though we can still hope) but nevertheless it was weird enough to satisfy even the most jaded Howard fan. All in all, it was probably the best Mantlo HOWARD story yet, not a little due to a better-than-average job done by Gene Colan and the superb Dave Simons (and their average is like everyone else's extraordinary.)

It's just a shame that I can't give a similar report for "The Dreadcliff Cuckoos." Frankly, I think Howard's last panel condemnation of the whole mess says it all, but did we have to suffer through 24 pages of same just to find that out? Speaking of Same, Bill, I think you missed a cue somewhere. I've been waiting five issues now for Paul Same to revert to Winky-Man, and when I saw him in his nightgown... well, what happened? Nothing.

The art was not what I would have expected from John Buscema and Klaus Janson. In fact, the whole story looked like a rush job.

Well, there you are... a scatter-shot review for a scatter-shot issue.

Better luck next time!

John C. Hess
27 Pineview Hts.
Avon, NY 14414

So, you liked Ms. Quackton, eh, John? Well, we're going to take the unprecedented step of helping to put you in touch with our fabulously feathered fraulein? Here she is, along with address: AMY QUACKTON, c/o PLAYDUCK MAGAZINE, 575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW STORK CITY, NEW STORK. Our delicate duckette has promised to keep all responses strictly confidential.

—Bill Mantlo

Dear Marvel,

There is definitely a downward trend developing in HOWARD THE DUCK. HTD #4 was the first issue in quite some time that I can honestly say was *bad*! The whole "Playduck" theme ended up stinking worse than rotten duck eggs. The authors of the various articles and features apparently thought that all they had to do was stick in the names of fowls to get laughs. Sorry, folks; it's not that simple. Almost all the ads, articles and prose stories bombed pathetically as a result (although "Birds in Bondage" was kind of cute).

I want to quickly point out the editorial slip-ups before moving on to more important things. In different sections of this issue, Duckworld's counterpart to New York is referred to both as new *Stork* and as New *Yolk*, and the HTD-cultists are called both WAKKies and WACies. How did these get past the various editors?

Now to the important things: I'd first like to raise an issue with Mark Gruenwald (or "Truman Capoultry", since that's the nom-de-plume he chose). It is implied that Howard was plucked from his world because he lost his grip on reality. He even went to great lengths to become a legal nonentity. Are we talking about the same duck, Mark? The Howard I've known since FEAR #19 would not deny reality; he would wrestle with it. The numerous jobs he held before his disappearance indicate how hard Howard tried to find his place in his world. But to depict him as totally giving up, to the

point where he would deny his very existence? No way! I also can't see Howard speaking before a Presidential gathering at that point in his life. His 1976 Presidential campaign was only a defense mechanism against the insanity of our world, and the HTD (color comic) #13 suggested that Howard was "Poundin' the Pavement" when the Cosmic Axis shifted.

I wish I could say that Bill Mantlo's two stories were better; I can't. Although HOWARD THE DUCK #1 was terrific, the ensuing issues just weren't as good. Last issue, for example, Bill completely lost the Christmas theme halfway through. HTD #4 didn't even come close to scoring. It's not that "The Maltese Cockroach" didn't have good points, but Bill should have carried the concept further, perhaps sticking in elements from a few Bogart classics. The Cockroach was a good character to inspire Howard's "This is all very Kafkaesque!" line as well as the homicidal-ickyness of most New Yorkers. However, Haney was totally flat and Hemlock Shoals should have been better than he was.

Regarding "The Dreadcliff Cuckoos;" well, at least Paul Same's finally awake. Other than that, the story was worthless. Really. It was a mistake to bring back the Adolph Hitler character; I saw nothing funny about it, nor in the return of Joone Moon (not Moon June, Bill) Yuc, Nurse Barbara, or Soofi. Separately, they may have been superb, but together they were only part of a mass of mishandled characters. That Howard never heard of Hitler in the time that he's been in our dimension, and that the Duck could animate a man-sized suit of armor are both highly unlikely. To make things even worse, Bill decided to conclude the story by pointlessly killing almost everyone off. To paraphrase Howard's closing comment: "That's the most ridiculous story I've ever read!"

I'll conclude by saying that Gene Colan, Dave Simons, and the cover by John Pound were excellent.

Ken Hart
540 Lincoln Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10306

I think you misread the "Truman Capoultry Interview." Ken, first off, Mark Gruenwald had Capoultry clearly state that most of his information was gleaned from dreams he'd had after Howard's disappearance from Duckworld. A highly subjective source, as he himself admits. Second, his interpretation of the information he procured through interviews and in-depth research was simply that... *his* interpretation. If you've read HOWARD THE DUCK #6 ("Duckworld!"), you by now see that the reality was

somewhat different. There, Howard is never depicted as "totally giving up." Nor is he shown addressing a Presidential rally (which, if you'll read the "Interview" again, it never said he did, either). He is shown immersing himself again in the affairs of his dimension, raging against Duckworld's inanities, and going out fighting.

Secondly, both you and John Hess seem to be trying to make "The Maltese Cockroach" something it was never intended to be. Perhaps the title is at fault. I was not trying to parody Dashiell Hammett detective fiction. I was trying to twist Kafka's "Metamorphosis" slightly and throw it back at the reader. The New York paranoia, people as an endangered species, was much more the point of the tale.

"The Dreadcliff Cuckoos" was, I admit in retrospect, a mistake. In it I was trying to establish Winda Wester's psychic abilities by depicting them rising to the surface again during the conflict between her and those whom she'd met under adverse conditions before. The story did not work, and were I able to change the past I would do all in my power to take it back. It may sound hackneyed, but we respect our fans for pointing out *faux pas* out to us, and for keeping us in line.

—Bill Mantlo

Dear Lynn and Everybody Else,

Playduck. Great. Fine and funny art, funny stories, lotsa laughs (although none as swell as I got from the One-Armed Bandit barfing), inspired layout, on-target satire, not enough sex, well-done features. Okay?

But... overkill. You got carried away. *Playduck Reviews* was one step beyond the bounds of being funny, or even cute. What it was, was dumb. It was the kind of thing one would expect from a person incapable of understanding the concept of what a pun is. *Duckbill Mantlo* is a pun; so is *Graeme Quacker*, and so is *Truman Capoultry*, and good puns at that. There were more such in the issue. But *Kurt Vonneduck* didn't make it. Neither did *The Duckfather* and some of the others. This section became just childish silliness. And what is "duckopomorphic"?

All in all, the issue was great until you got carried away and ducked it all up.

Robin Kincaid
7 Wall Street
Coventry, CT 06238

Dear Wise-Quackers,

I have purchased issues #1-4 of your fine HOWARD THE DUCK magazine and I have read them all over and over. But there is one question that sticks out in my mind: *Just what the hell is going*

on here?!!?!!?!!?!!?

William Stewart
7005 Monroe Ct.
Charlottesville, VA 22901

Dear Playduck,

I am a long-time reader of your excellent publication, and particularly enjoy your interviews. However, in your special issue on Howard the Duck you have done your readers a disservice by not presenting the full story. In your interview with noted author Truman Capoultry, you permit this overstuffed, squeaky-voiced, egotistical quack to go on at great length about his theories as to the fate of Howard. But you never question his research! Most of his data appears to have been gleaned from dreams. He says, in speaking of Howard's disappearance, "From all reports..." and, "All those who claim to have known him have told me..." as if he had done exhaustive interviews. Nonsense. I can testify to the fact that he did *not* question every available witness as to the most important and, indeed, *only known event* in Howard's life: his disappearance. How do I know? I was one of them. I was there.

Had Mr. Capoultry asked me, I could have informed him as to a number of highly suggestive circumstances concerning the event, such as: The Secret Service drake who followed Howard from the time he entered the crowd, and who quite literally pushed him to the forefront; the mysterious lady pinto in sunglasses lurking on the fringes of the crowd; and the Presidential aide who whispered to Duxon as soon as Howard appeared. This circumstance can clearly be seen on the videotapes.

About a planet of hairless apes I know nothing, but it seems clear to me that Howard's vanishing from here was in no way an accident, nor was his being at that rally a fluke. A fluke, as we all know, is a fish. For a drake, Capoultry lays a mighty big egg.

No doubt your, or some other highly enterprising investigative journal, will one day uncover and explain all these highly suspicious events. In the meantime, I remain respectfully yours...

Milton Teal
7 Swan Lake Drive
San Paitto, CA
Duckworld

I'm sure the truth will be uncovered, Mr., ah, Teal. Uh, nurse — the thorazine!

—Bill Mantlo

Dear Hairless Apes,

HOWARD THE DUCK #4 (or should I say, PLAYDUCK #4?) proved to be another superb issue. "The Maltese Cockroach" was fun, and Hemlock Shoals is probably the strangest character I've ever seen. I'd like to see more of Doctor Bong and the Kidney Lady

soon, if it can be worked in.

You have my vote for Ms. Amy Quackton as Playduck of the Year.

"The Dreadcliff Cuckoos" was another fine story. I appreciate your having brought back so many old characters and clearing up so many loose ends. It was also nice to see Big John Buscema back on the pencils, and a pleasure to revel in Klaus Janson's exquisite inking once again.

Again, a good mag, and the first comic I've ever had to hide under my mattress.

Patrick Hamou
650 Buchanan
Montreal, Canada

Dear Marvel,

Will you *pleeeeee* bring back Hemlock Shoals and give him a chance at a solo-adventure? Come on, Lynn! *This is the caterpillar we want in the Marvel Universe!*

Spencer Rodriguez
Rose Lane
Mr. Carmel, TN 37642

Dear Bill and Artists,

HOWARD THE DUCK #4 was a definite improvement over issues two and three. While neither story was a total success, they both had their flashes of imagination. "The Maltese Cockroach" wasn't bad, although I don't know that the hayseed bookseller added that much to the story. It might have seemed more humorous to have had Howard and Hemlock Shoals track down the Cockroach character on their own; it would have added an ironic note. It was a nice little update to the Cosmic Gem-Key story.

"The Dreadcliff Cuckoos" was even better and more interesting in that it wrapped up things (although I'm sure the last has not been seen of either Soofi or the Reverend Yuc) from the color comics, but it was also flawed. Why does Nurse Barbara, for instance, caress Hitler in one scene and yet, in another, announce that she hates men? What happened to all the henchmen/followers that Soofi, Yuc and Blowhard brought with them? I also expected Paul Same's awakening to be played up more, since his Winky-Man identity has been sublimated for so long.

What nearly wrecked HTD #4 was not the comic material, but the Playduck framing "gag." It almost made me gag. I hope this is the last we see of this type of peurile parody. I guess you deserve points for trying something different, but all I can give are demerits here.

Mike Moore
1310 Osage
Bartlesville, OK 74003

Dear Bill,

I would have written sooner but I'm not allowed to have sharp instruments. The only thing about

HOWARD THE DUCK #4 half-way decent was the cover. It tasted real good, once I added salt. The insides weren't as great, as the staples were hard to digest, but I did like the centerfold.

I'd like to write some more, but these funny guys in white suits are coming to fit me with a new wrap-around jacket. I guess they have to, though. I eat the buttons off all my other clothes. See you next ish.

Dennis Petilli
306 Terry Road
Smithtown, NY 11787

Not if I see you first, Dennis!

—Bill

Dear Marvel,

Being a HTD fan from way back, I feel I've noticed some changes that may not be as apparent to the newcomer. I thought I could share some of my observations with you.

Everyone, I think, agrees that a magazine format should (notice I said "should") be an improvement, allowing longer, more complicated storylines and better characterization. Unfortunately, since the change, there has been little improvement — in some areas even backsliding.

My biggest complaint is Howard's direction. Let me begin by saying that I'm an avowed Gerber fan. I followed him through the original Man-Thing series and all the way from Howard's origin to Dr. Bong's final (?) defeat. Howard has been a story of survival in a society which chooses to depersonalize the people who compose it. From this feeling of the "stranger in a still stranger land" has come some of the best satire I've seen in years. And that's where my complaint begins. All (with the exception of #3) of the magazines have lost touch with that fine line between satire and absurdity. Gerber's Kong Lomerate, the Space Turnip, the SOOFI, and Dr. Bong all symbolized some part of society. There was a reason for all of them and their actions! Lately, the villains just haven't cut it. I cannot believe that they are real people driven to their actions by real crises in their own lives. They all seem bent upon conquering the world through some mad, diabolical plan. Geez, that characterization is tired.

I am speaking of *The Dreadcliff Cuckoos* in particular. My intelligence was offended by that story. To bring all of those old, well-characterized villains back in one story was really cheap. Not only that, you turned them into mindless marionettes of the demented Dr. Reich which leads me to believe that a conspiracy existed throughout a good portion of the color series. I can't swallow that. Savage dill pickles, yes, but not all that. And then to bestow all those great mystical powers upon Winda

was too much. Even Daimon Hellstrom says that Winda possesses "certain latent psychic talents" but he further states that her psychic powers came forth in a moment of extreme stress and they were unlikely to ever occur again (HTD color #13). Don't you think the Son of Satan would have known if Winda could open a portal through the Cosmic Axis? What about Thog? If Winda opens said portal couldn't someone of something else pass through at the exact instant Bev and Howard do? Valid complaint?

Also, the "articles" that have been included in the format recently are, to me, a waste of valuable story space. Even in written form the satire is gone. I'm sorry, I don't find them humorous.

How about some praise? Howard as a taxi driver is fabulous. The possibilities are limitless. I'm very pleased that Paul Same has recovered from his somnambulance. By the way, what is the paraclete of Kabourka? Also, it was a good idea to add Claude Starkowitz and Lee Switzler to the list of regulars. And over-all, "A Christmas for Carol" was where Howard should be. Good story, good art, and a statement on Christmas and nuclear energy. #3 was definitely a step in the right direction as was "Captain Americana." I know you can do it and I'm looking forward to it.

Rich Simmons
8336 Osborn
St. Louis, MO 63136

As I think I've said before, Rich, Gene Colan and Dave Simons will be handling the lead feature in each issue of HTD. The second feature will (hopefully) be drawn by a different artist each issue, to try and give a more experimental approach to Howard's adventures. Next issue, for instance, features a backup feature by Marshall Rogers which parodies some of his most outstanding work for the competition. Ace Inker Bob McLeod is also interested in penciling a Howard story, as is MICRONAUTS artist Pat Broderick. But Gene (The Dean) Colan will be here every issue, as will Dutiful Dave Simons, just to maintain that very consistency you refer to. So see ya in sixty, Mr. Simmons. I don't think you'll be disappointed.

—Bill Mantlo

And just so we won't be disappointed, how about making a bee-line for the nearest pen and paper and letting us know what you thought about our mammoth Monopoly story. We'll be wauugghing for you at:

HOWARD THE DUCK
Marvel Magazine Group
575 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10022

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AND!

STREET PEEPLE (a story about *humans!*)

All This Excitement is Lovingly Wrapped in the Beautiful Art of **JOHN POUND**, and contains the usual blathering, complaining, and overwrought editorial as well as an "audition" by **Dave Sim**, the witty creator of **CEREBUS.**

HOWARD THE DUCK #8, On Sale in September!

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J. Carter of Mars #1
Shogun Warriors #1
Logans Run #1
Star Wars #6
2001 #6 & 9
Howard the Duck #10

SET #3

Spider-Woman #1
Human Fly #1
What If #2
Logans Run #2
She Hulk #2

SET #4

Machine Man #1
ROM #1
What If #3
J. Carter of Mars #2
Man Thing #1
King Conan #1

SET 45

Micronauts #1
Spider-Woman #2,3&4
What If #6
Ms. Marvel #2
Machine Man #2

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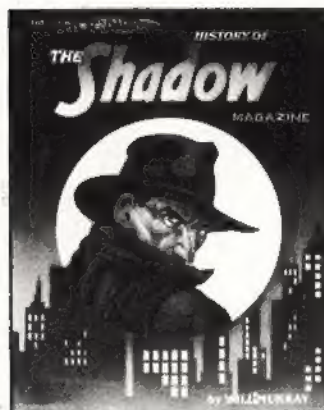
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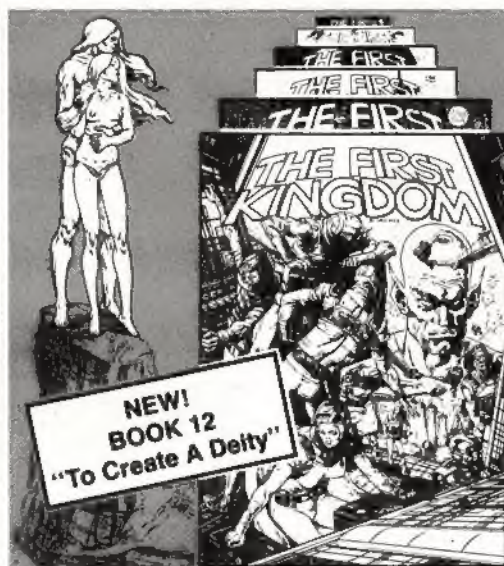
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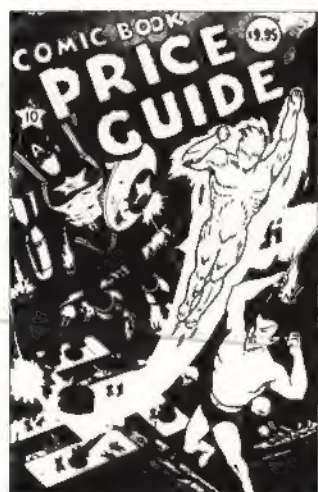
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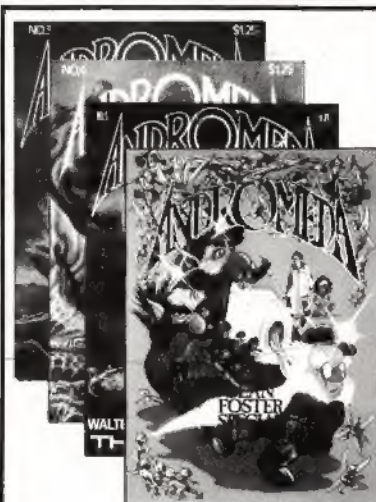
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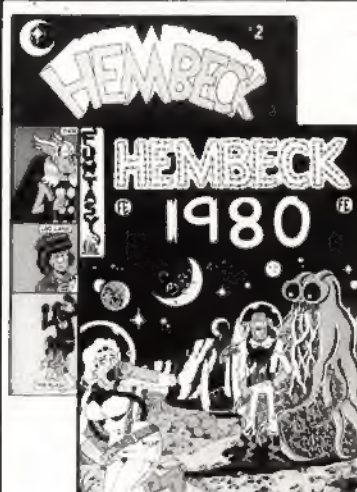
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